

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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OUR OWN FIRE-END.

When the frost is on the grun',
 Keep your ain fire-end,
 For the warmth o' summer's sun
 Has our ain fire-end;
 When there's dubs ye might be lair'd in,
 Or snaw-wreaths ye could be smoor'd in,
 The best flower in the garden
 Is our ain fire-end.

You and father are sic twa,
 Roun' our ain fire-end;
 He mak's rabbits on the wa',
 At our ain fire-end.
 Then sic fun as they are mumping,
 When to touch them ye gae stumping,
 They're set on your tap a-jumping,
 At our ain fire-end.

Sic a bustle as ye keep
 At our ain fire-end,
 When ye on your whistle wheep,
 Round our ain fire-end;
 Now, the dog maun get a saddle,
 Then a cart's made o' the ladle,
 To please ye as ye daidle
 Round our ain fire-end.

When your head's laid on my lap,
 At our ain fire-end,
 Taking childhood's dreamless nap,
 At our ain fire-end;
 Then frae lug to lug I kiss ye,
 An' wi' heart o'erflowing bless ye,
 And a' that's gude I wish ye,
 At our ain fire-end.

When ye're far, far frae the blink
 O' our ain fire-end,
 Fu' monie a time ye'll think
 On our ain fire-end;
 On a' your gamesome ploys,
 On your whistle and your toys,
 And ye'll think ye hear the noise
 O' our ain fire-end.

WILLIAM MILLER.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

"They know not the voice of strangers."

We wandered far on bleak and barren hill,
 Through death's dark valley took our
 dreary way,
 Found no green pasture, drank no freshen-
 ing rill;
 Weary our feet through all the sultry day,

And evermore we heard the jackal's cry,
 And fierce wolves howling scented out their
 prey:

And many forms of death were ever nigh,
 But He, the one true Shepherd of the sheep,
 Came down in pity from the mountain high,
 To seek the lost, and faithful watch to keep
 O'er those that sought the shelter of the
 fold,

True guardian still, though other shepherds
 sleep:

So own we Thee, O Lord, yet overbold

We leave the quiet stream and grassy mead
 And take our course, in stormy day and
 cold,

Through tangled brake and maze of rotting reed;
 Ah! would that we no other voice might
 hear

Than His who stands as priest to intercede,
 To Thee, Our Shepherd, still abiding near,
 And as Thou leadest, going out and in;
 So should we dwell secure from each dark
 fear,

Nor crop the poisoned flowers of pleasant sin,
 Nor heed the stranger when he fain would
 lure,

And with feigned words and wandering
 fancies win;

But meadows green, and waters clear and pure,
 These should be ours from youth to ripened
 age,

And clinging love would fail not to endure,
 But follow Thee through all its pilgrimage.

And we too are as shepherds; each must
 care

For souls around him, each his warfare
 wage,

For sheep that wander, brave the chill night air,
 Against the robbers fight with fearless heart,
 And to the fold the lost one gently bear;

Ah! be it ours to shun the hireling's part;
 True shepherds whom the porter's voice
 will own,

To guard with subtle truth, and guileless
 art,

To the great Shepherd like in look and tone,
 Still working bravely while our watch we
 keep,

Till we shall stand with palms around the
 throne:

And then we too shall know the other sheep,
 Not of this fold, which He will one day
 bring,

O'er moorland wild, bleak heath, and moun-
 tain steep,

And when the world's last suns their shadows
 fling,

One flock, one Shepherd in the eternal fold,
 Shall own their God, their Father, and their
 King.

Sunday Magazine.

E. H. PLUMPTRE.

From Macmillan's Magazine.
THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE REVIVAL
OF LEARNING.*

BY W. G. CLARK.

PART I.

TOWARDS the close of the fifth century of our era the Roman Empire of the West formally came to an end by the resignation of the puppet-monarch who, by a strange irony of fate, bore the name of Romulus.

A certain number, or rather an uncertain number, of centuries which followed, are known in history as "the Middle Ages." Such designations, necessary though they be, are apt to be misleading unless we bear in mind that they are merely conventional terms, adopted for the convenience of the historian, who must mark out his portion of the boundless field, and fix somewhere his point of departure and his goal. But in using them, we must remember that there are, in fact, no breaks in the long chain of cause and effect; no pauses in the activity of man, any more than in that of nature; no cataclysm and re-creation, but endless evolution; old forms decaying and new forms growing, in obedience to laws which the faith of Science holds to be eternal and immutable, like their Divine Author, even though the complexity of the phenomena may baffle her efforts to classify them and refer them to their causes. The hidden forces which wrought during the Middle Ages, silently and gradually changing the life, the language, and religion of the nations of Western Europe, had been as actively at work for centuries before, undermining and corrupting the whole system, political, social, and religious, of Imperial Rome; and the fall of the last Augustus was an event only important as furnishing a convenient epoch for the conclusion or the beginning of the historian's survey. It is not so easy to agree upon an epoch at which the Middle Ages may be supposed to cease. It may be convenient, with some writers, to fix upon the year 1400, which has the advantage of being a round number, and therefore easily remembered. If we want a date which has a more serious justification, we must first inquire what great event,

or events, had the most influence in turning the thoughts and energies of men into new channels, and in remoulding their social and political life after a new pattern. Shall we say the revival of classical literature and art? or the growth of a national literature among the several nations of the West? or the destruction of feudalism? or the change in warfare brought about by the use of artillery? or the invention of printing? or the discovery of America? or the Reformation? It is obvious that the historian would choose by preference one or other of these events as the point of contrary flexure, marking the end of the mediæval and the beginning of the modern world, in reference to his own special theme, according as he was writing upon forms of government, or military tactics, or letters, or commerce, or art, or religion. And it is equally clear that our modern life is the product of all these in combination, together with many minor events which escape our notice, and many occult forces which defy our penetration.

Again, the Middle Ages may be said to have terminated at different times in different countries, according to their advancement in the arts of war and peace. For example, the national literature of Italy owes its rise to the Sicilian poets at the court of Frederick II., at the beginning of the thirteenth century, and to Brunetto Latini and the predecessors of Dante at its close, a hundred years before Wicliff and Chaucer created a literature in England. The origin of French and Provençal literature is still earlier than that of Italy, while the latter country unquestionably takes the lead of all in the revival of classical learning and art. Germany claims the invention of printing, but a national German literature can scarcely be said to have existed before the time of Luther. The Reformation, which really reformed England, Scotland, and North Germany, and profoundly affected France, never gained a serious hold on Italy. In England the civilization begun by Chaucer and Wicliff was quenched by cruel persecution and disastrous civil war, so that the historian of mediæval England could not fitly end his task before the battle of Bosworth Field in 1485. The "Canterbury

* Two Lectures delivered before the Edinburgh Literary and Philosophical Institution.

Tales" belong to modern literature, but the Wars of the Roses to the Middle Ages.

On the whole, we cannot say when the Middle Ages ended, but we may use the term as a convenient notation generally intelligible. We know what "spring" and "winter" mean, though we cannot say when the one begins and the other ends. We may fix March 21st as a convenient date, though many a spring-like day may come before, and many a wintry day after. And the snow may lie thick upon the highlands long after the violets and primroses of the valleys have stolen into bloom.

For us the Middle Ages mean specially the period which elapsed between the decline of ancient learning and its revival.

But from this point of view the Middle Ages are commonly called by another name which is more questionable — "the dark ages." Now this might mean the ages which are dark to us, with respect to which we are in the dark. As a humble confession of ignorance this would be unobjectionable, only we might have to extend the term to other ages. But it is generally used with a feeling of complacent superiority on the part of the scholar towards people who wrote barbarous Latin and could not read Greek, or on the part of the enlightened Protestant towards benighted Papists. I know not who invented the phrase, but the feeling of contempt which prompted it is very conspicuous in the Italian literature of the Renaissance, and in the French and English literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. When John Evelyn sees a great cathedral, he condescendingly says that it is "Gothic, but fair." The very word "Gothic," which to us expresses the most beautiful style of architecture, was first applied in contempt. The term "dark ages" is frequently used by Gibbon (*e.g.* iii. 346), who despised them more for what they knew than for what they did not know, more for their devotion to Christian theology than for their indifference to ancient learning. I believe it was Doctor Johnson who said — "I know nothing of those ages which knew nothing," and thought his ignorance a proof of wisdom. But for the last fifty years or more, a great reaction has been in progress, due to many conflu-

ent tendencies of the age, most powerfully helped forward in Britain by the genius of Walter Scott, but felt in all the nations of Western Europe; and now men are ready to adore what their fathers would willingly have burned. Our architects build houses for us after a mediæval pattern, "with windows that exclude the light, and passages that lead to nothing," with battlements and loopholes highly suitable for bow and arrow practice against an assailing enemy, but not otherwise useful. And one great writer, in his "Past and Present," contrasts the thirteenth century as an age of manly earnestness and honest sincerity with our nineteenth century as an age of shams, hypocrisies, and make-believes. Let us guard against exaggeration on either side. To affirm that these Middle Ages had no light of reason and conscience for their guide, no culture and no art, is to slander Christianity and natural religion, to ignore the evidence of extant monuments and of history; to say on the other hand that we must look to them as guides and examples, not only in art, but in politics and religion, is to deny the great consoling doctrine of human progress proclaimed by the poet:

"Yet, I doubt not, through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened by the process of the suns."

Even in the darkest period of the dark ages the light of ancient literature and ancient civilization was never wholly extinguished. Successive hordes of barbarians first wasted and ravaged and held to ransom, then conquered and settled in Italy, France, and Spain, but they ended by learning the language and adopting the manners of the conquered. In Britain, indeed, the Angles and Saxons swept away all trace of Roman culture, but then in all likelihood Britain had never been so completely romanized as France or Spain, and its invaders bore a far larger proportion to the native inhabitants. In Italy, France, and Spain, the conquerors, chiefly of Teutonic origin, like those of Britain, and belonging to a race naturally tenacious of old customs, were forced by their paucity of numbers to learn the language of their

subjects, into which they imported their own vocabulary so far as it concerned war and the chase. But while they learned the Latin language, nothing could make them learn the Latin grammar. The cases of nouns and the declensions of verbs were in great part lost, and the result was a de-based jargon, available for the ordinary intercourse of daily life, but scorned by all who had any pretensions to learning, and held to be utterly unfit to be a vehicle of accurate reasoning or lofty eloquence. Centuries were to elapse before these vulgar tongues shaped themselves into Italian, French, and Spanish, each having its own special forms, and each becoming the vehicle of a literature stamped with the characteristic genius of the people.

But side by side with this popular language, a more classical Latin maintained its ground, chiefly by the influence of the Church. The rich and varied ritual, the authorized version of the Holy Scriptures, and the voluminous works of the Western Fathers, were all in Latin, which if not pure, according to the standard of Cicero or Quintilian, yet observed in the main the old rules of grammar and syntax. Latin was the language of the Church, which never lost its hold on the Roman provinces of the Western continent, which speedily reconquered Britain, and by and by extended its sway far beyond the limits of the ancient empire. Besides this, the Roman civil law, the noblest and most enduring monument of ancient genius, continued to maintain itself as the rule of civic life and the bond of social order. Here and there, if temporarily abolished by violence and compelled to yield to the customary law of barbarian conquerors, it re-asserted its claims, proved its right to rule men by its reasonableness and its completeness, and has been the basis on which every legislator of the continent has founded his code, from Theodosius to Napoleon. Everyone who studied law must needs acquaint himself with Latin, and that not superficially but accurately, so as to discriminate between the meanings and shades of meaning which each word bears according to its context. Again, all sacred and all profane literature in Western Europe was written in Latin. And the amount

was enormous. If anyone will take the trouble to glance over the footnotes and the indices to Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, or Milman's *History of Latin Christianity*, he may convince himself that even in the darkest and most troubled times there was no century, scarcely a decade, which did not contribute some work still extant to theology, philosophy, or history. These works may now be obsolete and unreadable; but to become obsolete and unreadable is the lot of all, except the happy few in whom genius is combined with a favourable opportunity and good fortune. They prove at all events that learning was never extinct, because the authors wrote in a language very different from their mother-tongue.

Not only the laws and language, but many other traditions of the old Empire survived its fall. Cities continued to be governed by the old municipal regulations; the "potestas," or magistrate, remained in the "podestà;" and the petty princes who seized upon separate provinces, sought for a kind of sanction for their usurpations by taking the titles of Duke, Count or Viscount, which the later Emperors had granted to the officers who exercised authority in their name.

Amid the incessant wars, restrictions and vexations, which the division into small principalities brought upon the people, they looked fondly back to the time when the whole empire was united under one strong central government, as to a golden age; and hence it was that Charlemagne found enthusiastic support when in his own person he revived the Holy Roman Empire.

Rome was in the eyes of men a Holy City, quite as much because the Cæsars had reigned there as because it held the tombs of the martyred Apostles. It was, indeed, the longing for unity and peace, such as the popular imagination believed to have been realized in Imperial Rome, the *Pax Romana*, which enabled the Popes to found their spiritual empire. It was from sound policy and not in mere vanity that they transferred to themselves the title of Pontifex Maximus, which had belonged to the Emperors, and thus invested their ceremonies and decrees with the au-

thority of the most venerable pagan tradition.

Nor were the material monuments of the ancient empire without their effect upon the imaginations of men; especially during the earlier period of the Middle Ages, when these monuments remained almost unimpaired in their colossal grandeur, and before returning wealth and reviving skill enabled men to build structures for themselves almost as colossal and as grand. The military roads which stretched across morass and over mountain, straight to their mark like the purposes of destiny, but now leading from desert to desert; the fragments of bridges of stone which once spanned the mightiest rivers, as the Rhine and the Danube; the untenanted castles and abandoned cities; temples and amphitheatres towering amid the wilderness, where now there were no priests and no worshippers for the one, no combatants and no spectators for the other, — must have impressed men with the belief that they were “piled by the hands of giants for god-like kings of old,” and with the feeling that they themselves belonged to a degenerate and inferior race. Especially did the great buildings in Rome itself, the Coliseum, the Palace of the Cæsars, the baths of Diocletian and Caracalla, the Pantheon of Agrippa and the Mausoleum of Hadrian, strike pilgrims from distant lands with awe and wonder. Bede records the profound astonishment with which English pilgrims gazed on the mighty circuit of the Coliseum. Centuries later the same ruins, or rather the ruins of these ruins, inspired Petrarch with his zeal for the revival of the ancient learning, and Rienzi with his plan for the restoration of the ancient polity of Rome. It was among the ruins of Rome that Gibbon first conceived the idea of his immortal history; here Byron found a theme for some of his noblest poetry; and the traveller of the present day, though he has seen and admired the chief architectural monuments of mediæval and modern times, receives from the contemplation of the relics of ancient Rome an impression different in kind, deeper, and more lasting.

I have already alluded to the fact that the Church, while struggling for supremacy, and after that supremacy was won but not yet fully assured, had the worldly wisdom to compromise with Paganism. When it took possession of the Pagan Temples it adopted the accustomed holy days, the priestly vestments, the altars, the incense, the chanted ritual, and even a semblance of the sacrifice. The deifica-

tion which Paul and Barnabas had rejected with horror at Lystra, was complacently acquiesced in. The beneficent attributes of pagan gods and heroes were transferred with their shrines to Christian saints. The Mater Dolorosa took the place of the mourning Ceres, the Virgin and Child were substituted for Isis and Horus, and the Beloved Physician was worshipped in the stead of Æsculapius.

“St Peter’s keys a christened Jove adorn,
And Pan to Moses lends his pagan horn.”

Even pagan literature was pressed into the service of the Church. A treatise still extant, attributed to the Emperor Constantine, appeals to the oracles of the sibyls and to the famous fourth Eclogue of Virgil as Gentile prophecies of the coming of the Saviour. But when the Church had secured its domination and had nothing more to fear, it showed a very different spirit and became implacably hostile to all that savoured of pagan antiquity, whether in literature or art. Sallust, Cicero, Livy, Virgil, Terence, Horace, had been the text-books in every school. There was very little in these authors from which the most perverse ingenuity could extract an ecclesiastical moral, so the Church never rested till they were superseded by Augustine and Prudentius. Gregory the Great (590—604 A.D.) fulminated his anathemas against all pagan literature, and is said to have scattered to the winds what remained of the Palatine library founded by Augustus. In the eyes of the devout Churchman the gods of the heathen were evil demons, and the heathen books which recognized their divinity were to be consigned to the flames as impious and heretical.

And yet it is to the Church, though in the Church’s despite, that we owe the preservation of these ancient authors. This is a paradox, but it is undoubtedly true: and it came about through the influence of the monastic orders.

Monasticism is not a product of Christianity. Before the time of Christ in Syria and Palestine and Egypt there were monks and hermits, both communities of Cœnobites and solitary Anchorites, who had retired into the desert, to escape from the temptations of the world, to devote their lives to prayer and fasting, and, by humbling the intellect and conquering the passions, to merit an eternity of reward. If the example of Christ, who found temptation in the wilderness and His field of action among the haunts of men, was opposed to such a course, many isolated

texts of the Old and New Testaments might seem to sanction it. It was at Patmos, not at Ephesus, that the Apocalypse was vouchsafed to St. John. The monastic life, which in the earliest ages of Christianity spread widely in the East, was enforced in the West by the authority of Athanasius and the example of Jerome. A more powerful impulse still was given to the system by St. Benedict, born at Nursia in 480, who founded first the monastery of Subiaco and then that of Monte Cassino, which to this day the traveller from Rome to Naples sees two thousand feet above him, like a little city along the mountain ridge. The rule of St. Benedict, which rigidly parcelled out each day between religious worship and manual labour, left no room for profane studies. But gradually the rule was relaxed; pious donations and bequests poured wealth upon the monks; the humble sheds which had sheltered the earliest brethren expanded into the magnificent monastery with its church, refectory, guest-chamber, and a palace for its Abbot. The monks, now lords of wide domains, performed their manual labours by deputy, and amused their leisure with literary pursuits, reading, copying and collating manuscripts, among which the proscribed works of pagan authors found a place,—furtively, it is true, and under protest, but thus acquiring the additional flavour of forbidden fruit.

Again and again reformers arose,—Benedict of Aniane, Odilo of Cluny, Gualberto of Vallombrosa, Hildebrand, (afterwards Pope Gregory VII.), Hugh of Cluny, Stephen Harding of Cîteaux, and Bernard of Clairvaux—who endeavoured to restore the rigid discipline of the founder of the order. But there is a saying of Horace which has grown into a proverb. "Drive nature out with a pitchfork, still she will come back." Precisely what had happened at Monte Cassino happened at Cluny, Cîteaux, Clairvaux, and Fountains, and the Benedictine writers by their numerous quotations seem to have been proud of the learning thus surreptitiously acquired. Among the rules of the Abbey of Cluny, where silence was enforced, or supposed to be enforced, there is a code of signs by which the monks were to make their wants known. If one wanted a book from the library, he was to make a motion with his hand as if turning over the leaves. There were special signs to indicate that he wanted a missal or a psalter, or a theological treatise; but if he wanted a profane work written by a pagan,

he was to scratch his ear like a dog, "*quia nec immerito infideles tali animanti comparantur.*"

This may remind us how St. Jerome in his retreat at Bethlehem endeavoured, to cure his mind of its hankering after classical literature by submitting his body to repeated flagellations, the very method which in our public schools is applied, quite as ineffectually, for the opposite purpose.

There was not a single monastic order which did not speedily lapse from the austerity of its founder's rule. The disobedience and worldliness of the Benedictines especially took the noble form of a devotion to literature. In spite of St. Benedict and St. Bernard, the brethren of the Benedictine convents vied with each other in the formation of splendid libraries, of which that of Monte Cassino remains to this day, not indeed intact, but still rich in treasures both sacred and profane. And the French Benedictines have preserved even to our own times the noble tradition of their order.

The eleventh and twelfth centuries were marked by a great revival of Latin classical literature under the guidance of Lanfranc, Anselm, Gratian and Iñerius, and a famous but now almost forgotten Englishman, John of Salisbury. Flourishing schools were founded at Bec and Chartres, at Monte Cassino and Salerno; and from this period we may date the beginning of the great Universities, Bologna, Paris, Oxford. At each of these places there were schools of immemorial antiquity, but it was at this time that they acquired corporate rights and independent self-government. "*Universitas*" means a corporation.

The revival of classical literature was partly a symptom and partly a cause of a great and general insurrection against Papal authority and ecclesiastical prescription, which, led by Abelard and Arnold of Brescia, seemed at one time likely to antedate the Reformation by nearly four centuries. Heresy was rife in all the schools; the most polite of the provinces of France, Languedoc, was in the power of the Albigenses; democratic principles were maintained in every city of Italy, and a Republic was established in Rome itself. But the hour was not yet come. The weight of custom, authority, and tradition, was too strong for the newly awakened forces to move. The old crust of the volcano heaved but did not break, and the imprisoned Titans had to bide their time. Abelard was silenced, and Arnold was

hanged; the Roman republic was suppressed by Adrian IV., and the Albigenses of Languedoc were exterminated by fire and sword in the crusade headed by Simon de Montfort.

The vigorous repression of these new heresies in politics and religion was the chief object of the pontificate of Innocent III., perhaps the greatest man who ever filled the papal throne. His reign, from 1198 to 1216, was almost coincident with that of John of England. His task was facilitated by the internal distractions of the great European kingdoms, whose subjects were disposed, by their longing for peace, to welcome an arbitrator who assumed to speak in the name of the Prince of Peace, and by the lassitude and weariness which supervenes upon every intellectual effort, especially when it is premature. But his work was most powerfully assisted by two men, Dominic, born at Calaroga, in Castile, in 1170, and Francis, born at Assisi in 1182. These men were to the mediæval Church of Rome what Ignatius Loyola was to that Church after the shock of the Reformation, — its renovators and preservers. The founder of the Dominicans and the founder of the Franciscans, differing in character, were at one in their faith and zeal, and worked in converging lines towards the same end.* Dominic, the eloquent preacher, the relentless persecutor, the virtual if not the actual founder of the Inquisition, whose life was one long aggressive warfare, — Francis, the devout and tender mystic, whose life was one long, self-inflicted martyrdom, — were agreed in denouncing the wealth and luxury, and worldliness and secular learning, of the monks and the clergy. The Church, they said, wholly absorbed in material interests, had left the people hungering for spiritual food; hence the success of the heretical Peter Waldo and his missionaries. The Mendicant Friars caught up the weapons of the heretics, and wielded them in the service of the Church. A few years after their first foundation, there was scarcely a city in Christendom which had not at least one convent of Friars, Preachers, or Minorites. Papal authority sanctioned the fanaticism which it could not control. All over Europe there was a strange outbreak of superstition and fanaticism, of which the successful preaching of the Dominicans and Franciscans was partly a symptom and partly a cause. In the belief of men Heaven had again bent

itself to earth. The miracles of Dominic and Francis, attested by eye-witnesses, rivalled (as their followers boasted) the miracles of Christ himself. Seventy years later, when faith had begun to cool, it was again warmed to fervor by the most signal of all miracles. The house of the Virgin was transported by angels from Palestine to Loreto. No one doubted a fact which was vouched for by competent witnesses, and solemnly affirmed by the Pope. In England the new Saint Thomas of Canterbury had come to be regarded as more powerful than our Lady of Walsingham herself. At this time, too, religious zeal, combined with love of adventure, impelled the noblest of the European youth to join successive Crusades, whence, for the most part, they never returned. Wave after wave they foamed themselves away upon the barren Asian shore, one of the saddest examples of the wasted power and misdirected energy which hindered human progress in the Middle Ages; and not in the Middle Ages alone. While the apostles of ignorance and obscurantism found a congenial audience in every village and hamlet, they attacked the strongholds of learning and free thought, the Universities, by a different method. They drove Truth back to her old cavern, and piled mountains of casuistry upon its mouth. The youthful intellect was diverted from any path which might have led elsewhere than to Rome, by entangling it in the mazes of an endless labyrinth. The Dominican Schoolmen, Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas, the Franciscans, Duns Scotus* and Bonaventura, devoted an energy and industry almost superhuman to the construction of elaborate systems of dialectic, proving as a foregone conclusion the orthodox creed on all subjects of human knowledge contained in the sentences of Peter the Lombard.

One or other of these systems, or rather the great system of which these were but varieties, triumphed in every university. No wonder that classical learning, which had begun to revive in the two preceding centuries, declined in the thirteenth. I believe that the MSS. of classical Latin authors transcribed in the thirteenth century are much rarer than those of the eleventh or twelfth. Many MSS. of ancient authors were doubtless obliterated then, in order to write on the parchment some treatise of the prevailing scholastic divinity. Nor

* "*Perche ad un fine fur l'opere sue.*"
DANTE, *Paradiso*, xiii. 42.

* Duns Scotus, who died in 1303, is not mentioned by Dante. Albert, Thomas, and Bonaventura (of whom the two last died in 1274), are among the chief saints in heaven. (*Par.*, xiii.)

was it learning alone that was oppressed. All original speculation in philosophy, all original research in science, was sternly prohibited. For this offence Roger Bacon, who unhappily in his youth had been seduced to take the Franciscan garb, was thrown into prison, and released only to die.

It is impossible to estimate how much has been lost to mankind, how long the progress of mankind has been retarded by this diversion of its intellect to a barren and profitless task. What humanity lost, priestcraft gained; a few more centuries of unavenged tyranny and undetected imposture. The spiritual revival, however, produced by the preaching of the friars, was but a fire of straw; the ardent fanaticism which they had kindled sunk into cold indifference, — a feeling not distasteful to the magnates of the Church, whose pomp and magnificence were tacitly rebuked by the poverty of their humblest servants. And soon,* over the Mendicant orders themselves, came the inevitable change. To them, as to the first brethren of the older orders, reputation for sanctity brought gifts and donations; worldly possessions produced a worldly spirit. The churches and convents of the Dominicans and Franciscans soon rivalled in splendor those of the Benedictines and Augustinians, and the apostolic missionary degenerated into the lazy monk or the sturdy beggar. The infant literature in the vulgar tongue of each nation is filled with satires upon the friars, showing how odious they had become to all except the lowest of the people. Many a popular song rings the changes in a ruder form upon the famous burden —

“What baron or squire, or knight of the shire,
Lives half so well as a jovial friar?”

An attempt to revive the principles and practice of St. Francis produced a dissenting sect of friars, the so-called Fraticelli, who instead of being, like the first Franciscans, the devoted servants of Rome, actually denounced the Pope Boniface VIII. as Anti-Christ, and, in the wild views they held as to the immediate reign of the Holy Ghost, anticipated the doctrines of the Fifth Monarchy men of the seventeenth century. And William of Ockham, himself a Franciscan, the greatest of English Schoolmen, dared to turn against the papal supremacy the very weapons of dialectic

subtlety which had been invented to defend it. If his fame has been eclipsed by that of his follower, Wicliff, it is because the latter availed himself of a new and more powerful instrument, the native tongue, which in every country of Europe was henceforth to open the way to the hearts of the people.

And this brings me to the first incontestably great name in modern literature, Dante; — a theme infinitely interesting and fascinating, but upon which I must only dwell so far as it is germane to my subject, viz. to point out to what extent his mind was influenced by the recollections of classical antiquity.

Dante, in the beginning of his great poem, represents himself as meeting the shade of Virgil, whom he greets in the well-known lines: —

“Or sei tu quel Virgilio e quella fonte
Che spande di parlar sì largo fiume?”

O degli altri poeti onore e lume,
Vagliami il lungo studio e'l grande amore
Che m' han fatto cercar lo tuo volume.
Tu sei lo mio maestro e'l mio autore:
Tu sei solo colui da cui io tolsi
Lo bello stilo che m' ha fatto onore.”

The primacy over all the Latin poets of antiquity which Dante here gives to Virgil, had been enjoyed by him throughout the whole of the Middle Ages. He was more copied, more quoted, and more read, than all the others put together. This pre-eminent fame he owed, in great measure, to the fourth Eclogue, which, as I have already mentioned, was interpreted as a prophecy of the coming of Christ, and this won for his poems an exceptional favor among the most rigid theologians. Even Gregory the Great would have hesitated before condemning Virgil to the flames. The learned took him for a prophet, the vulgar for a magician. The custom of consulting the *Sortes Virgilianæ* about future events, began in something more than sport. Even Pope Innocent VI. (1352 — 1362), himself famed for his knowledge of the Canon Law, thought that Petrarch must be studying magic because he read Virgil (*Petr. Epist. Rev. Senil. i. 3*).

Next to Virgil, Dante knew Statius best, whom he represents as having been secretly baptized, and thus freed from the limbo where the other ancient poets dwelt, suffering the eternal punishment of desire without hope. First among these he places the sovereign poet, Homer, who, however, was but a name to him, for there was then no Latin translation extant. Next to Homer

* Roger Bacon, writing about the year 1257, says, “Novi ordines jam horribiliter labefacti sunt a pristina dignitate.”

comes "the satirist Horace."* Ovid is the third, and the last Lucan. He refers elsewhere to the *Metamorphoses* and the *Pharsalia*. In the 22nd canto of the "*Purgatorio*," he mentions, as dwelling with Homer, Terence, Cæcilius, Plautus, Varro, Juvenal, Persius; and of the Greeks, Euripides, Anacreon, Simonides, and Agathon, a tragic poet of the second rank, also mentioned by Chaucer, and known in the Middle Ages because he had been quoted in the *Ethics*, *Rhetoric*, and *Poetics* of Aristotle. Pindar, Hesiod, Æschylus, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Theocritus, are not named; nor of the Roman poets, Luccretius, Catullus, Propertius, Tibullus, or Martial. Apart from the poets, are a motley group of philosophers, Greek, Latin, and Arabian, gathered round their sovereign, Aristotle, "il maestro di color che sanno." Next to him, in front of all the rest, are Socrates and Plato. It is worthy of note that Petrarch, in the next age, assigned the first place to Plato, and the second to Aristotle, thus marking a direct advance in the knowledge of Greek philosophy. In Dante's mind Aristotle was the master of Plato. Seneca is mentioned, and Cicero, strangely placed between Orpheus and Linus. He nowhere names Sallust, or either Pliny or Tacitus. Of Greek he knew nothing, and, with the single exception of Aristotle, no ancient Greek author had in his time been made accessible in a Latin version. In Latin his reading had been more varied than select or critical. In an Italian work, the "*Convito*," he mentions, as the best prose writers whom he knew, Livy, Cicero, Frontinus, and Paulus Orosius—a strange medley. His own Latin style is what we should expect from this judgment. It is the flowing, facile Latin which was the common language of educated men, Churchmen, and Schoolmen all over the world, contemptuously nicknamed by the scholars of later days "Dog Latin." Happily for the world, since it was in the enforced leisure of exile that he wrote his great poem, but unhappily for himself, Dante's life fell upon evil days, when Italy was split up into a multitude of petty states, and each state torn by factions, — Neri and Bianchi, Guelfs and Ghibellines. Dante became a Ghibelline, because he looked upon the restoration of the old Roman empire, in the person of a Teutonic sovereign, as the only possible salvation of his distracted country. The empire of the Cæsars, as he conceived it to have

been,—strong to enforce peace, repress faction, and punish crime,—was his ideal. Hence it is that, in the deepest depth of Hell, suffering tortures worse than the worst of those he had devised for the blackest guilt, he places Brutus and Cassius, the murderers of the first Cæsar, side by side with Judas, the betrayer of Christ. In his treatise, "*De Monarchia*" (which alone with the *Divine Comedy*, is mentioned in the epitaph on his tomb, said to have been written, in anticipation of death, by himself), he claims for the Emperor, as successor of the Cæsars, unbounded temporal authority, leaving to the Pope unbounded spiritual authority as the vicegerent of Christ. He quotes Livy and Lucan to prove that God wrought special miracles in the founding of the Roman empire, and cites, with as much reverence as if it were a text of Holy Writ, the famous line of Virgil:—

"Tu regere imperio populos, Romane,
memento."

Dante's life of disappointment closed in 1321, when the prospect of a restoration of peace in Italy, under a strong central authority, such as he had dreamed of, seemed further removed than ever; when the supreme power, or rather the shadow of supreme power, was divided between a Pope who had removed for security to Avignon, and an Emperor who was not strong enough to force his way to Rome.

Petrarch was born in 1304, seventeen years before the death of Dante. The two men whose names were to be associated for ever as the fathers of Italian poetry, never met in life. Petrarch's parents were Florentines, of the Ghibelline faction, and were living in poverty and exile at Arezzo, when their son was born. When he was eight years old they removed to Avignon, then the residence of the Popes; and there, for the best part of his life, he resided, in the city or the neighbouring Vauluse, hard by the fountain of Sorgia, which his genius has made as famous as Horace's fountain of Bandusia, and which, like it, is annually for his sake visited by pilgrims from all parts of the world. His name dwells in the affectionate remembrance of men because of the exquisite poems which he wrote on the life and death of the lady whom he called Madonna Laura. I have to speak of him here as a man of learning, yet I cannot forbear to glance for a moment at the more captivating phase of his life, "the love which never saw its earthly close," a theme which has been to many a poet the source of his purest and most

* Does this phrase imply that Horace's Odes were unknown to Dante?

powerful inspiration. In the Romances of Chivalry, every hero devotes himself to the service of some fair lady, who, by the gift of a glove or a knot of ribbon, or by an approving smile, amply rewards him for all that he has done, or suffered, in single combat, in battle or in tournament, for her sake. After the pattern of these romances, the young knight fashioned his life. Don Quixote with his Dulcinea was only ridiculous because he came too late, when the old order had changed and given place to the new.* The Madonna in heaven, the type of all womanly beauty and purity, must needs have her counterpart on earth. This ideal love did not in the least clash with the love a man bore to his wife, the mother of his children. Dante saw his Beatrice for the first time at a children's party, when he was nine and she eight years old. He rested content with the memory of her golden hair and mild angelic eyes. When they grew up, he married somebody else, and she married somebody else. The real Beatrice on earth was but a passing fancy; the object of his perpetual adoration was the ideal Beatrice who guided him through Paradise. Petrarch saw Laura in church and fell in love, not with the lady, but with her image, as it dwelt in his mind. One of his biographers tells us that when all Avignon was ringing with the sonnets he wrote in her praise, the Pope offered to make him rich with ecclesiastical benefices, and a dispensation to marry, but the poet refused, because he could not write verses about his wife.† That passion, indeed, cannot be very deeply seated, whose outbreaks admit of being parcelled into fourteen lines each, nor can that mind be much disturbed which is capable of an endless play of fancy and the combination of intricate rhymes. The poet is like the actor, who, if he really felt the emotions he portrays, could not portray them half so well, and who must be master of himself if he would be master of his audience.

Of these poems Petrarch, in after days, speaks thus contemptuously—"vulgaria illa juvenilium laborum meorum cantica, quorum hodie pudet ac pœnitet." It was upon his Latin works in prose and verse that he built his hopes of eternal renown.

* The famous line, "Cervantes smiled Spain's chivalry away," is founded on a misconception. He smiled Spain's chivalric romances away. The chivalry had gone long before.

† Vita, per Hier. Siquarrafchum; Sig. 4. v. "The Pope," he says, "was Bonedict, who succeeded Clement. The real order of succession is Clement V., John XXII., Bonedict XII. (1334-1342), Clement VI.

When at the age of thirty-seven he was crowned as Laureate in the Capitol of Rome, it was rather, as I gather from his own account, because of his Latin poems, his Bucolics and his unfinished epic Africa, than because of his poems in the vulgar tongue. It was as an imitator of Virgil that his fame had spread to Paris; it was his Africa that he submitted to the judgment of the accomplished King Robert at Naples. This was a special favour. The poet never, while he lived, allowed a copy to be taken. This affectation of mystery made the poem talked about all the more. Was Petrarch in this also deliberately imitating Virgil, who left the *Æneid* unfinished at his death?

With Petrarch, Laura was but a transient fancy; learning a lifelong passion. His father had destined him for the law, but, like the "clerk foredoomed his father's soul to cross," he turned with loathing from the dry text-books of his profession to study with ardent enthusiasm the ancient Roman orators and poets. So, when Walter Scott was supposed to be qualifying himself for an advocate in Edinburgh, his heart was with Thomas the Rhymer, or the moss-troopers of the Border. As Scott, when his genius had free scope, because the reviver of the Middle Ages, so Petrarch became the reviver of Roman antiquity. But the work of Scott affected only the fancy and the imagination; that of Petrarch gave the first impulse to a movement which changed the whole course of education, and finally revolutionized the creed of half Europe. And the movement has not spent its force yet. Petrarch tells us how his father one day detected him in the indulgence of his truant spirit, dragged his darling books one after another from their hiding-places, and threw them all on the fire, from which, relenting at the sight of his boy's tears, he rescued Virgil and Cicero's Rhetoric.

It is to Petrarch's zeal, in all likelihood, that we owe the preservation of several of Cicero's half forgotten works; among them the priceless "Epistolæ ad Familiares." With this view he travelled first in France and then in Italy, diving into the dusty recesses of convent-libraries, and drawing thence treasures of ancient wisdom more precious than rubies. He instituted inquiries for the same end in England and Germany. His position as the acknowledged chief of literature, at once the most popular poet and most powerful critic of his time, caused his enmity to be feared and his friendship sought by Pope and cardinals, by kings and nobles;

and the most acceptable present which could be made to him was the gift of an old manuscript. Hence the library which he collected was probably for Latin classical literature the richest of its time. His fame, and its fame, reached even Constantinople. At that date some of the learned men of the East knew Latin; none of the learned men of the West knew Greek. Petrarch himself had learned a little, but, as it would seem, very little. His teacher was a certain Barlaam, a native of Southern Italy, or, as it was anciently called Magna Græcia, where some traces of the old language still lingered; first a monk of the order of St. Basil, then Professor of Theology at Constantinople, and in 1339 sent by the Emperor Andronicus II. to Avignon, to treat with Pope Benedict XII. about the reunion of the two Churches. When Petrarch made his acquaintance in 1342, he had renounced his Greek heresies and come a second time to Avignon, to solicit a bishopric, which he obtained through the intercession of the poet. Petrarch complains that he taught Barlaam more Latin than he taught him Greek, and when Barlaam obtained his suit the lessons came to an end, for the Bishop went away to look after the feeding, or, possibly the shearing, of his flock. Through him Petrarch had entered into correspondence with a learned Greek of Constantinople, Nicolas Syroeceros by name, who in compliance with an earnest request sent him a copy of Homer. Petrarch's delight was unbounded, or rather would have been unbounded if he had been able to read it. "Your Homer," he says, in his letter of thanks, dated "Milan, January 10" (the year not given), "is dumb to me and I am deaf to him. Yet I rejoice at the mere sight of him, and often I embrace him and sighing say, O great poet, how I long to hear thy voice!" Petrarch died with this longing unsatisfied, but, as we shall see, the divine impulse was communicated to others and produced results of which he did not dream. There was then, as I have said, no Latin translation of Homer extant. One of the Iliad in hexameter verse, made in the time of the Empire, had long perished.* It was not however the only Greek book in his library. He had already a copy of Plato (or some part of Plato), which, strange to say, he found somewhere in the West; where, he does not tell us. "Erat mihi domi, dictu mirum, ab occasu veniens

olim Plato Philosophorum Princeps." Scholastics, he goes on to say, might deny this supremacy of Plato, but Cicero himself and Plotinus and Ambrosius and Augustine would admit it.

Petrarch was in constant feud with the Schoolmen of his time. He denounced as a sordid mechanical craft their routine of syllogisms, which led, in one unvarying circle, from premises taken for granted, because settled by authority, to conclusions equally settled by authority, from which it was heresy to depart; he denounced their system of education as cramping and narrowing the intellect instead of expanding and enlarging it. He urged the substitution of the "humaniores literæ," — that more human, more humane literature, where the most precious gems of thought were set in the purest style of eloquence. In his eyes the Doctors of the schools were men who kept their young Samsons grinding chaff in the same dark mill instead of arming them to slay the Philistines of ignorance and barbarism. In the view of Dante the Schoolmen Aquinas and Bonaventura had been when alive the consummate masters of all theological and philosophical wisdom, and were dwelling after death in the ineffable light of Paradise. Petrarch, though he did not dare to speak with disrespect of these canonized saints themselves, attacked their followers as mischievous pedants who fostered real ignorance by making a trade of pretended knowledge. Neither did he spare the professors of the other faculties, the physicians and the jurists. While for himself he claimed to be an orthodox believer, he undermined the very foundations of orthodoxy by assailing the principle of authority.

Living as he did in the immediate neighbourhood of the Popes and sharing their bounties, he did not question their right divine, but he scrupled not to remonstrate against their wrong government. That he could do so with impunity is worthy of notice. The Pontiffs at Avignon, Frenchmen and men of the world, wealthy and self-indulgent, with no belief of their own, too indifferent even to be sceptical, were not destitute of a certain good-humoured tolerance. And Petrarch had become, as it were, supreme Pontiff in the world of letters, his judgments infallible, and his person sacred. From the intrigues, the grossness and corruption of the papal court he turned with disgust, to find more congenial companionship among his friends of the library, loftier aspirations, and a purer morality in Cicero and Seneca, of whom

* Some fragments have been edited by L. Muller. Its reputed author is "Pindarus Thebanus," — an absurd pseudonym, or an absurd error.

he might have said in the words of another laureate, Robert Southey —

"My life among the dead is past :

Around me I behold,

Where'er these casual eyes are cast.

The mighty minds of old.

My never-failing friends are they,

With whom I converse day by day."

His chief ground of complaint against the Popes was that they kept the Church in shameful captivity and exile, away from its own sacred city Rome. He constantly speaks of Avignon as the Babylon of the West; yet to him, in his heart of hearts, Rome was sacred, not because she had been Christian and Papal, but because she had been consular and republican. Dante's ideal had been the Empire of Augustus; Petrarch's ideal was the Commonwealth of Brutus.

Hence it came that he was the enthusiastic encourager, if not the original inspirer of Cola di Rienzi, a name made familiar to multitudes by the genius of Lord Lytton. The true history reads like romance. Rienzi, a dreamy enthusiast, had wandered and mused among the ruins of Rome, now abandoned by the Popes to misgovernment and anarchy, till his mind became, like those ruins, a medley of recollections, in which regal, republican, imperial, and mediæval times, Pagan and Christian rites, were inextricably blended. But among these fancies one clear definite purpose shone distinctly out, — to suppress the nobles who maintained themselves as petty tyrants, each in his castle with an army of retainers, and to make all citizens equal before one just and impartial law. Rienzi's enthusiasm was contagious, and his eloquence convincing: in unity of purpose the people found a momentary strength, before which the nobles quailed; and once more the Roman Republic was proclaimed, with Cola di Rienzi for its tribune. This was in 1447. Petrarch was in ecstasies. He addressed the tribune in his most mellifluous Italian,* and his most grandiloquent Latin.† He sets him above Romulus, Brutus, and Camillus, as rescuing from slavery a mightier Rome, girding it with defences stronger than walls, and founding a more enduring liberty. But the triumph was short. Rienzi's enthusiasm was doubtless from the beginning tinged with insanity. Drunk with vanity; too often drunk with wine, he thought only of devising incongruous titles and decorations for himself. He called

himself not only Tribune but Augustus, he bathed in a vase of porphyry traditionally sacred as the baptismal font of Constantine, he was knighted in the Lateran church, and crowned with seven crowns in Santa Maria Maggiore. The story of his fall, his wanderings, imprisonment, trial, his restoration as Senator of Rome under papal authority, his murder at the hands of the populace who had once crowned and worshipped him, is (as I have said) stranger than fiction. The Roman Republic established by Rienzi was brief-lived, like that founded by Arnold of Brescia in earlier, or that founded by Garibaldi in later, days; but if the Popes had been able to learn the lesson, they might have read in it a sign that a new power was coming to life, or rather that an old power was rising from its grave, to dispute their authority, and to wrest from their grasp the wills and consciences of men.

The temporary success of Rienzi's adventurous enterprise is significant as a sign of the times. Petrarch's influence wielding only the pen was far more extensive and enduring. When he left Avignon for Italy, he was received in every city with all possible honours both by princes and people. His declining years were soothed

"With all that should accompany old age,

As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends;"

and when he finally retreated to end his days at Arquà among the Euganean hills, his solitude was cheered or troubled by admiring disciples from all parts of the world, some of whom sent him their tributary verses or encomiastic orations, and some came in person to recite them. He died at the age of seventy, having attained an almost universal fame, such as no man of letters before or since ever acquired in his lifetime. His fame as an Italian poet still survives, if half eclipsed by the fame of Tasso and Ariosto. His fame as philosopher and Latin poet is gone, or lives only as the memory of a memory, the shadow of a shade. As we turn wearily over the pages of the ponderous folio which contains his Latin works, we ask how it came to pass that these trivial common-places, this tawdry rhetoric, this indifferent Latin, moved contemporary men to tears of enthusiastic admiration. The reason is that he first gave voice and form to the blank misgivings, the secret discontents, the half-conceived aspirations, of his time. The indifferent Latin was of classic purity in comparison with the Latin of his predecessors, the tawdry rhetoric glowed with poetic

* "*Spirto gentili*," p. 496. (*Rime*.)

† *Ep. Hortatoria*, p. 595. (*Opera*.)

lustre as contrasted with the dull verbiage of the Schoolmen, the trivial common-places were then new and startling truths. The neglected volume which few try to read and none succeed in reading, contains the spells by which the mighty magician called up the spirits of the ancient dead, and was once venerated as the Gospel of the Apostle of the Humanities. The spirits have delivered their message, have told us all they had to tell, and the good tidings are old news now. Moreover, if we have learned much which the contemporaries of Petrarch did not know, they knew much which we have forgotten, and many a saying which was pregnant of meaning for them is barren for us. In any case, if our range of vision is wider than theirs, it is well to remember the old simile of the dwarf standing on the shoulders of the giant. Not that I believe the intellectual faculties of one generation to differ much potentially from those of another: the actual results differ according to circumstances. When men are compelled to devote all their energies to self-defence or self-support, to war, or the chase, or agriculture, the intellectual fruit is *nil*; when the mental energies are wrongfully directed, to the grinding, and regrinding of any chaff, scholastic, classical or scientific, the fruit of such labour is worthless. It may have a conventional value at the time and help a man to buy his bread withal, but to posterity it will be as valueless as a French assignat or a Pennsylvanian bond.

Petrarch's great service was rendered in calling men away from the grinding of chaff to fields of useful labour, from scholastic logic to the study of the Humanities. His work was of immense value at the time; it was done by him and his followers so thoroughly and so well, it has entered so much into our thoughts and feelings, that we cannot conceive how men thought and felt before. But for Petrarch and his successors, modern thought, modern belief, and modern civilization would have been very different from what they are.

From Macmillan's Magazine.
CHRISTINA NORTH.

BY E. M. ARCHER.

CHAPTER IX.

MEANTIME, Christina went to her home with the visions which her visit had called up still before her mind. She had not

been recalled to the past by anything that she had seen; she did not think for a moment of the future, which at that time seemed far distant; she was occupied with the glimpse she had had into another world, and she dreamt only of the things that she had seen — of Captain Cleasby's looks and words, of his sister leaning back in her chair and looking at her with lazy curiosity; and of the frame in which these things were set, of the luxurious room, and the brilliant flower-beds below the terrace, and the pictures on the walls, and the great stone hall. Thus, to the anticipations and longings which had filled her lonely life there had succeeded the all-absorbing interest of the present. It was not that she was dazzled by the admiration she had called forth, or that she thought much about it, nor that she regarded the Cleasbys as her superiors. It was pleasant to hear them talk, and she wished that she might go again; but she would not go unless Miss Cleasby asked her, and she knew that she had not asked her this afternoon; that, though she had been kind and courteous, she had not spoken of future meetings or closer intercourse. But as yet she did not ask herself the reason of this, and it was another who first disclosed to her Augusta's motive. It was after she had told of all she had seen and heard, sitting by the parlour window, whilst her mother sighed and listened, half with regret and half with pleasure in her auguries; and Mr. Warde, who was there, wrote copies at the table for his night school, but now and then joined in the conversation.

"Of course they don't care for us any more than we care for them," said Mrs. North; but, after all, that is no reason for not showing civility. If you were to go there once to satisfy Miss Cleasby's curiosity, I think you might have been asked to go again for your own pleasure."

"She was very kind," said Christina. She was sitting at the open window with her work lying idly upon her lap, and one hand played with the creepers which clustered round the wooden framework.

"You don't know about people being kind," said her mother; "you never think of what they say to you. I talk, and talk, but I don't believe you hear one word out of ten. And Miss Cleasby might have asked you to go again. I am sure it is not our fault that her brother is idling about the place; we never ask him, and I don't see that it is our fault if he does come."

Then all in a minute there flashed across

Christina's mind the meaning of his sister's manner, and the explanation of her silence when he begged her to come again. What did it mean? Why should he not come to the house if he chose to come? Why should she — why should any one object? And as she asked these questions she leant farther out of the window, and looked down upon the roses, that the evening wind might blow upon her face.

Christina said nothing, but she could not help laughing a little softly to herself at the idea of Captain Cleasby being a charge to any one, or causing his sister anxiety. Life came easily to them, she was sure, and was not, in their eyes, the serious thing that Mr. Warde considered it to be.

"I don't quite see why people should not be idle if they like," she said.

"There is an old song which seems to show that if they do not find fitting employment for themselves, some one else will provide them with work injurious to themselves and others," said Mr. Warde.

"Of course I know the tiresome old hymn," said Christina irreverently; "but it is pleasant to be idle. I like to sit here in the window and do nothing, and I don't see why I shouldn't."

"You have not been idle," said Mr. Warde. He got up from his chair and walked to the window, and looked gravely at the scattered rose-leaves which had fallen under Christina's restless fingers. Christina laughed, but she blushed a little at the same time.

"You should not intimate so plainly who has provided my work for me," she said; "it is not very polite. But I will do my work now, or write your copies for you, if you like."

"Thank you, but I prefer my own handwriting."

"What are you setting as copies?" said Christina, coming to look over him, "Command your temper"! Oh, Mr. Warde, I hope you were not thinking of me!"

"I wish you would sit quiet," said Mrs. North plaintively, "and take some sensible employment; or, if you must talk, at least talk rationally. One would have thought you would have been saddened by the sight of your old home, but somehow it seems only to have made you foolish."

"I can't be always mourning and repenting in sackcloth and ashes," said Christina petulantly; "and if you don't want to hear me talk, I can go to grandpapa."

"I cannot understand Christina," said her mother when the door closed upon her; "she is so childish in some ways. Sometimes the least thing is enough to put her out, but she does not feel for our real troubles. When one thinks of what we have lost, and the little that is left to us, it is heartless in her to be so unconcerned."

"No, no, not heartless, Mrs. North: you forget how young she is. Little things, such as seeing new people — such as going to the Cleasbys to-day — make events in her life. Do not grudge her any happiness; depend upon it, she will have enough of sorrow to bear."

"Everyone has sorrow, nobody knows that better than I do," said the poor woman; and there was more of real regret and less of discontent in her voice than usual. "I don't want her to have sorrows, — her life is not such a cheerful one; only I should like her to have a little more sympathy."

"I think you do her an injustice," said the clergyman; "do not forget that she is very young, and her life has been a sad one in many ways. Good night, Mrs. North; brighter days may yet be coming," he added, as he gathered up his books and prepared to take his departure.

He was a sanguine, contented man, and yet Mrs. North's murmurs and discontent did not anger him as they would have angered some men. Even her melancholy retrospections called forth sympathy from his liberal and tolerant spirit, though they were as foreign to his own nature as Christina's vague longings and aspirations. He thought much of the Norths as he walked home that evening — of the old man's increasing sullen bitterness, of the widow's sadness, of the money difficulties which he knew were growing upon them, but mostly of Christina, whose natural happiness was changed at times to rebellious discontent, and whose youth was clouded by the cares and painful struggles of a poverty-stricken home. It was not much that he could do, he thought, but what he could do should be done. Unless, indeed, Christina could be taken away, and then — would that be right by her grandfather and her mother? Thus he speculated without arriving at any definite result; only from that time he went more to the White House, and, as troubles seemed to thicken round her, he often came to shield Christina from her grandfather's anger and her mother's reproaches — not that she felt them very deeply; perhaps she might, as her mother

said, be heartless, or she had some hidden spring of gladness which they did not know.

Miss Cleasby did not come to the White House, nor had Christina again been to the Park, but yet they met as such near neighbours could not help meeting; they met in the lanes, and sometimes walked together; or Captain Cleasby came to see Mr. North and lingered in Mrs. North's parlour afterwards, and he would ask Christina to come and see his sister, but Christina would not accept his invitation. And so the summer months passed away, and it seemed to Christina that the flowers had never bloomed in such beauty, and that the summer winds had never blown so softly, and that a glory hung over the brown heath which it had never known before.

In a fortnight it would be September, and the Cleasbys were not to be quite solitary any longer: some men were coming to stay there for shooting, and one or two ladies, though they were still living very quietly.

In a few weeks Bernard would be returning home. It was a long time since Christina had heard of him or thought much about him: she did not see his mother very often, and when she did, Mrs. Oswestry was as unwilling as herself to enter upon the subject. She had a misgiving that the young people might have been foolish, and she thought it best that absence and silence should work a natural cure; more especially since she had received her sister-in-law's confidences about the hopes she entertained respecting Mr. Warde's relations with Christina. But now Bernard was coming back: he wrote in good spirits, and was prosperous and happy; nevertheless, he said he was counting the days until his return, and there were one or two little touches in his letter which made his mother uneasy, though there was no mention of Christina. And now they would be meeting again, and she must speak of him or it would seem unnatural, and tell Christina that he was coming back.

"I expect Bernard to come home in two or three weeks," she said one day when Christina was with her in her garden, tying up some flowers which had been beaten down by a storm the night before.

"Oh, is he coming back?" said Christina as indifferently as she could; but she bent her head over the flower-bed, and turned away that her aunt might not see her face. And Mrs. Oswestry could not but see that she was moved, and misinter-

preting her confusion, thinking, as was natural, that her flush was a flush of pleasure, and that she was shy of showing the gladness the tidings had brought her. She did not know that they had brought her no pleasure, but a rush of shame and regret and a longing to escape that she might not be forced to meet him. She did not know that the memories which constituted Bernard's happiness had become an oppression to Christina which she would fain have put from her, which she actually had put out of sight during his absence, but which had started from their resting-places at the sound of his name and the prospect of his return.

Yes, they had arisen, and were now crowding her mind and overwhelming her with reproaches. She could not help thinking of him as she bent over the flower-beds, feeling the first pang of the knowledge which had been thrust upon her; as she walked quickly home across the heath; as she sat over the sewing in the evening; as she lay sleepless upon her narrow bed;—through all, the thought of Bernard stood before her—of his return and the inevitable meeting. And yet she had not meant to be untrue. She had not changed towards him; only she no longer looked to the Homestead as her future home, and she dreaded the revival of old hopes. She gave a sigh of relief when she remembered that three weeks lay before her, three weeks of liberty: she would try to forget it, for she could not think what she might do; she could not make up her mind until there was no longer a way of escape.

In the meantime the fates in which she trusted were weaving new nets for her feet, and preparing fresh pitfalls along her path. Miss Cleasby had gradually made some acquaintances in the neighbourhood, and she was about to gather them together as a return for the civility that had been shown her; and they were pleased at the novelty and the little excitement, and thought the Cleasbys seemed nice people; for they had seen more of Captain Cleasby than of Augusta, and had fortunately heard nothing of the discussion which took place between them when the plan was first suggested.

"Yes, my dear Walter, certainly,—if you think it will be proper; but what do they eat, and what do they drink, and what will they do with themselves when they do come?"

"They are not barbarians," said Captain Cleasby; "I suppose they will do what other people do. A garden party is always

a stupid business, but I suppose they will like it."

"It is the sports, the sports and pastimes that weigh upon my mind," said Augusta, languidly.

"Well, we must put up some croquet-hoops, I suppose; there is no need for you to take any part in what you call the 'sports,' though I never heard such a word used except in connection with school-feasts, and it is suggestive of nothing but boys jumping in sacks."

"Sacks! boys in sacks! a schoolfeast! I declare you have hit upon the very thing! We will ask the neighbours to look on; it will give them a sense of superiority, and they will not expect to be entertained themselves. I know how the thing is done—I have seen it. Benches full of little boys and girls, clothes' baskets of cake, watering-pots of tea. We can do it beautifully on the lawn, and it will please Mr. Warde."

"The devoted Curate! of course. But oh, Augusta, I don't think I shall like it at all. Will other people like it?"

"Why not? They can play croquet, or dance if they like in the remote perspective. And then we shall have done our duty by the parish."

"Is this the sister who hated schools and poor people, and everything connected with the office of Lady Bountiful?" said Captain Cleasby, raising his eyebrows slightly. "I would not be a stumbling-block for the world; only forgive me, Gusty, if I say it is not quite in character."

"Am I never to grow wiser? Surely I may be inconsistent if I like!"

"Of course: only I suppose I am privileged to make my observations; to examine the motive and the final cause. If you were an ordinary young lady, I should suspect you of admiring the Curate; but you, my dear Augusta, have a soul above curates."

"I object to generalizations," said Miss Cleasby; "there are differences in curates. As to Mr. Warde, most certainly I do admire him for his energy and devotion to his 'work,' as I suppose he would call it. It is curious that a man should throw himself into it in the way he does. I declare the other day he came up here so full of some lad or other he wanted us to take on at the farm, because he was not doing well where he was, getting into bad company and bad ways, that really I began to feel too that Jim Barrow's future was of the highest importance and an all-absorbing interest. I laughed after he was gone, to

think how seriously I had bent my mind to the consideration of the matter."

"You cannot make me afraid for you," said Walter, smiling, "though you do look so unkindly upon my little predilections; I nevertheless give you leave to admire the parson as much as you like. Shall we say the 4th—that will be Tuesday—for this festivity? How amused people would be if they could see you and me giving a schoolfeast! But in these uncivilized regions, where no one knows us, I suppose it seems quite natural and proper."

Thus it was arranged, Captain Cleasby only further stipulating that Christina should be asked. "She will be our greatest ornament, always excepting your curate, Gusty," he said; and though Miss Cleasby answered that "she would be more ornamental than useful," she had of course no wish to exclude her from so unlimited an entertainment.

The neighbourhood generally was well pleased: Mrs. Sim was sure that it was very kind, and her daughters would be most happy to assist in any way which lay in their power; and Lady Bassett, an old friend of General Cleasby's, who lived at the other side of Overton, heard Augusta discussing her preparations, and laughed and declared she should drive over with a party,—it would be so amusing to see Augusta doing the honours. The Gregsons were coming, and Mr. Warde, of course; and Christina had received a cordial invitation from Miss Cleasby. She would not say no, but she hardly knew whether she was pleased at the prospect of going among numbers to the Park. It was not that she was troubled by any of the misgivings which tormented her mother, as to how she would appear among the neighbours of whom she knew so little, and among the Cleasbys' grand friends who were strangers to her; nor that she thought of them in connection with herself: but that now for the first time she was to see Captain Cleasby among his old acquaintances, the people with whom he had interests and reminiscences in common; and she wondered if the new circumstances would divide her from him, and if she would again see the barrier which lately she had almost overlooked.

The broad stretch of level lawn, lying at the bottom of the steps which led down to it from the terrace at the Park, was, as everyone said, the very place in which to give a schoolfeast. The low fencing separated it from the fields which lay beyond, sloping down to the road, and the big cedars bounded it on the one side, whilst the flow-

er garden and standard roses lay on the other. The flowers were still fresh and blooming, although it was the beginning of September, for there had been rain the week before; and Captain Cleasby had disconsolately depicted the misfortunes attendant on a wet day. "I know how it will be, Augusta," he had said: "a fine morning, of course; no excuse for postponing this dreary festivity; but just as we get them seated at the tables, down will come the rain, and we are in common humanity forced to invite the whole host, wet boots, fustians, and everything else, into the house."

"It will not rain," his sister had answered; "I won't allow such grumbling;" and she had proved right; and Tuesday came, and the sun blazed fiercely as a September sun should, and the long cool shadows lay across the lawn, and the south wind blew over the brilliant flower-beds and fluttered the folds of the white table-cloths.

Augusta stood at the top of the terrace steps to receive her guests, but it was early as yet, and the school children had not arrived.

"Dear Augusta, I am so pleased to see you looking so well," Lady Bassett said, as she stepped out from the drawing-room on to the terrace, and came forward and kissed her; for she had known her for years, and she was a very affectionate gentlewoman, with a fair complexion and pale blue eyes and a caressing manner. She had her two girls with her and several other young people, and they all clustered round their hostess with some cordiality and more curiosity, for they were seeing her under new circumstances, and Augusta was not generally popular with young ladies.

"Oh yes, thank you, I am quite well again," she said, in answer to Lady Bassett's salutation: and she did look not only well, but very handsome, standing there in her deep mourning among the girls in their muslins and coloured ribbons; for there was something striking in the contrast, and her long black dress suited her massive beauty better than anything lighter or more girlish.

"Come and sit down," she said to Lady Bassett; "it is so hot, and the children have not come yet;" and then she sat down herself in a low garden chair and paid no more attention to her younger guests; for it had never been her habit to put herself out of her way for anyone; so she sat pulling a geranium absently to pieces, and did not even pay much heed to Lady Bassett, who talked at intervals, and

mentally wondered why Augusta's manners had not improved. She had been a good deal in the sun that morning, and the chair was very comfortable, and Lady Bassett's voice was apt to sink into a murmur, and the wind blew very softly, and everything combined had a soothing effect; and when Captain Cleasby came round to the corner of the terrace where they were sitting in the shade, to beg his sister to come and receive some new arrivals, he found that her eyes were closed, and that she was breathing softly, with her hands lying loosely upon her knees. Lady Bassett was still talking, but she was looking away from Augusta, with her parasol between her and her auditor.

"I was just telling your sister," she said, "that in my opinion you ought to have some more flower-beds on the other side of the cedar. A cedar is always such a dark thing," said Lady Bassett, a little contemptuously.

"Yes, you are quite right—very dark indeed," said Walter, hardly knowing what he said in his vexation, and only anxious to shield his sister's misbehaviour. "I came to take Augusta away: the Creeds have just come;" and he took one of his sister's hands as he spoke. "Gusty, you must really come," he said, with rather more sharpness in his voice than the occasion seemed to Lady Bassett to warrant.

"Oh, Walter!" said his sister, slowly opening her eyes; and then she smiled languidly.

"You know Admiral Creed, don't you, Lady Bassett?" Walter said, to give her time to recover herself. "He lives three miles on the other side of Overton; they are the oldest established people hereabouts, I believe."

"Yes, of course I know them. Your brother is quite right, Augusta; you had better go and receive them,—he is rather a touchy old man. Come, my dear, you have really spoken to nobody but me."

"I thought Walter was equal to any number of young ladies," said Augusta; "they are really much more in his way than mine." But at last she did relinquish her chair, and went towards the cluster of young ladies and the young men who were straying about on the terrace, rather as if they did not quite know what to do with themselves.

Admiral Creed was looking hot and fidgety, for no one but Walter had been there to receive him, and he was anxious to explain why his wife had not come, and to represent that his presence was only to be accounted for by the necessity of chap-

eroning his daughter; but he calmed himself at Augusta's approach, and only wondered that she did not seem to miss Mrs. Creed at all.

"I think you might make up a croquet set now,—some of you young people, I mean," she said, thereby giving mortal offence to the Admiral, who was the most noted croquet player of the neighbourhood, and who pursued the game with the enthusiasm of youth. "Walter, are the hoops there? I hope they are in the shade. Is your son with you, Admiral Creed?"

"Yes, he is on the lawn somewhere: and I thought I might bring a friend of his—Fielder; I think he said he used to know you."

"Of course—we are old friends," said Augusta; and she held out her hand to a handsome young man standing a little in the background, and smiled as he said something of pleasure at meeting her again, thinking of the conversation she had had with Walter, in which Algy Fielder had taken so prominent a part. But she had not any more time for him now; people were arriving fast, and although Lady Bassett and her party kept rather distinct from them, the Overton people all knew each other, and there was a buzz of talk and a sound of laughter as they stood about together in groups, or looked on at the croquet players knocking the balls about on the lawn. And then suddenly there was a little pause in the conversation of those standing nearest to the glass door, and people looked round; and although Captain Cleasby's back was turned, he felt instinctively that Christina had come amongst them.

He knew it quite well, even before Algy Fielder exclaimed, "Who is that girl, Cleasby?" and he answered without turning round, only for a minute interrupting his conversation with Lady Bassett: "Oh, that is our neighbour, Miss North."

"He knew it by instinct," his friend said, laughing; and then, though Captain Cleasby still talked on to Lady Bassett, he moved to the back of her chair so as to see how Christina was received; and he saw that people looked at her a little strangely; they did not know her, and she did not know them; the Overton people were affronted at the attitude taken towards them by Mr. North, and would not be the first to make advances to his granddaughter, who now came amongst them for the first time, alone and unprotected. And he saw too that Christina remained standing still for a moment irresolutely; and though he was a little anxious, his eyes rested with pleas-

ure and pride upon her graceful figure. He was too far off to see clearly, but he knew quite well how erect she was holding her head, and how her beautiful eyes were looking round fearlessly at them all.

"How on earth did you know who I meant?" Algy Fielder asked him.

"Simply because she is the only girl about here you would look at twice," he answered in a low tone, so that Lady Bassett did not hear; and it was true enough that he had known well that Christina alone among his guests could call any marked attention upon herself.

His sister went forward to meet her, and he noticed with pleasure the cordiality of her greeting; and then she introduced her to some of the other visitors, and Captain Cleasby, relieved from his fears lest she should be slighted, went off to attend to the croquet players, and did not at once go to speak to her.

Soon after there was a general crowding to the front of the terrace, and the croquet players interrupted their game, for the children, headed by the teachers, came walking in procession across the lawn, waving their blue and yellow banners; and Mr. Warde followed, evidently occupied with the business of the day, and thinking chiefly of how his children would demean themselves; and there was a general bustle, and the children gathered round the tables. Most of the visitors remained standing upon the terrace, preserving their attitude of spectators, but Christina went down the stairs to speak to the poor people whom she knew, and be civil to the teachers; and Miss Cleasby too went down on to the lawn, and shook hands with Mr. Warde.

"I hope everything has been properly arranged," she said; "please give any orders you like—we know so little about this sort of thing. Need they sit any longer staring at their plates, or is that a necessary part of the proceedings?"

"Grace has not been said yet," said Mr. Warde; and then he moved to the end of the long table, gave the order to stand, and took off his hat. Somehow, after all the gossip and laughter that had been going on around her a minute before, and which was going on now at the further end of the lawn, there was something ludicrous in the rows of solemn faces, half fearful, half expectant, and the sudden silence. Augusta could have smiled, but for Mr. Warde's imperturbable gravity, as he said grace in sonorous tones, simply but solemnly, standing bareheaded on the lawn.

And then the real business of the day began. Some of the young people came

down from the terrace to help in waiting on the children, and if the principal actors were grave and silent, at least laughter and merrymaking went on around them, to which they paid no sort of heed; and the young men made their little flattering speeches, and the girls smiled and chattered, passing in and out of the sunshine and the shade; and Captain Cleasby sat on the end of one of the tables, talking to Christina. There he stayed in spite of Lady Bassett, who smiled as she passed, and told him it was an undignified position for the master of the house, and in spite of Mr. Warde's frank remark that he was rather in the way.

"Why should they want to disturb us? It is very hard that I mayn't have my little pleasures," he said to Christina.

He had seen that people looked at her curiously, and he was determined to make it up to her—or rather that had been the motive he had avowed to himself when he first took his place by her, but it was forgotten now. Augusta was too wise to make any attempt at interference, but she noticed it as she sat under the cedar, and it confirmed a determination she had conceived some days before.

"What a pretty girl! but who is she?" said Lady Bassett, looking at Christina.

"She lives close to us—a granddaughter of the old Mr. North who used to live here, you know," said Augusta. "I don't suppose you would be likely to have met her before; they keep very much to themselves. We don't know them very well, though we are such near neighbours."

"Walter seems to know her pretty well," said young Fielder, putting up his eyeglass.

Miss Cleasby took no notice of the observation, but she heard it nevertheless, and turned away rather quickly to speak to Admiral Creed; but she could not escape from discussion of the Norths.

"So that is one of the Norths who used to live here?" he said. "I remember their leaving, of course, but I understood the old man would see no one now. They were entirely ruined—the son did something very discreditable, I believe—this girl's father, I suppose."

"I suppose so," said Augusta: and soon after she got up and walked away to speak to Mr. Warde, who was arranging what she had called the "sports and pastimes."

"The Cleasbys seem to have quite taken up the neighbourhood," said Lady Bassett.

"With a vengeance!" said Admiral

Creed. "Upon my word, there are heaps of people here I hardly know. The parson she seems to think so much of is an excellent fellow, I believe, but he is not a man you care to ask to dinner!"

Thus did people look on at their hosts from their various points of view, while the shadows lengthened and the sinking sun blazed upon the windows of the house; and gradually they began to disperse, and the children's spirits flagged, and Mr. Warde got them into order and marched them off, cheering lustily for the "Squire" and his sister.

Miss Cleasby was still lingering on the lawn, though the grass was growing damp with dew, and she owned to being tired of it all. Many of her guests had not yet taken their departure; and when Admiral Creed's carriage did not come, Miss Cleasby proposed that they should go into the house, for already it was growing chilly, and the sun had set.

Conversation flagged, as was natural, during the quarter of an hour which followed. Admiral Creed fretted and fumed, and openly wondered why his coachman was so unpunctual; and the young ladies tried to make friends with Miss Cleasby's retriever, who was as indifferent and unsociable as his mistress; and Captain Cleasby, who might have been of use, had gone to the stables with some of the young men. But the time did not seem long to Christina. She had not yet gone home, because just now she was not so placed as to make it convenient for her to take her leave. She was standing in a recess of the window just behind the curtain, and old Mrs. Gregson was sitting before her and had begun to tell her a long story about a schoolfeast she had once given when she was first married. The old lady was very deaf, and Christina was called upon to make no response, and could only smile and nod her head in answer; and Mrs. Gregson was pleased, and thought that she was a nice girl and interested in an old woman's talk, and did not know that Christina was only living the afternoon over again and smiling at her own recollections.

And so Mrs. Gregson went on in her quavering animated old voice, and Christina stood there half leaning back against the open window, and her lips just parted with that unconscious smile, when, suddenly, voices in the garden struck upon her ear and brought a change over her thoughts. There had been laughing and talking going on all around her, and she had paid no heed to it, she had not even

heard it; and the voices below the window outside on the terrace were not loud, and she was not listening, and yet as she caught the first word her attention was fixed, and she could not help hearing what was said.

"Don't be such an idiot, Algy. You will be asking me next if I have any intentions with regard to old Miss Trenchard, who wears a front and a poke bonnet!"

"So I shall, my dear fellow, when you devote yourself to Miss Trenchard for a whole afternoon and speak to no one else, — of course, if you did, people would begin to talk."

Christina did not tell herself that they were speaking of her, but a sudden flush came over her face, and she made an involuntary movement as if to escape; but Mrs. Gregson was in front of her, still chattering on placidly, and there was a table in the way, and she was as it were hemmed in on every side.

"Half the harm in the world is done by what you call 'talk,'" she heard Captain Cleasby say. "As to Miss North, somebody said she was to marry her cousin, so I wish you would not talk nonsense: she is a charming girl, and I should be very sorry that any mischief should be made by a friend of mine."

Then there was a tramp of footsteps on the gravel, and Christina knew that Captain Cleasby had moved off, but still the conversation went on below the window, and now it was young Mr. Creed who spoke.

"It is all very well for Cleasby to talk," he said, "but he cannot expect people not to be amused at his way of going on. Do you remember how he flirted with that girl at Naples, Fielder? I believe his sister was very angry about it; and all the world was astonished when she married that Captain Davison."

"I rather think you had better keep your reminiscences to yourself: he was not half pleased at my making fun of him about Miss North: and after all I don't wonder, — she's pretty enough for anything; but I suppose he will look out for money, or connection, or something, if ever he does get himself —"

And at that moment Christina came suddenly out of the corner, pushing against the table and interrupting Mrs. Gregson's discourse, and coming forward into the middle of the room.

"Are you going?" said Miss Cleasby, as she came up to her with her cheeks still flushed by the sudden rush of shame

and indignation, and her lips no longer parted, but firmly shut.

Yes, she was going, she said: and she made her way out from amongst them all, and went rapidly down the slope towards her home, that she might not run any risk of again meeting Captain Cleasby. "Why did people say such things?" she was thinking to herself as she passed along quickly. Oh, it was cruel, it was horrible; why should people say such things just because — because — Captain Cleasby had been friendly to her? Her afternoon had been so happy: she had not thought of anything but the pleasure of the moment; she had not been in any way deceived, and yet Captain Cleasby had been different from usual. And now she knew that all the time he thought she was going to marry her cousin. It was some silly report, of course — no one really knew how matters stood between her and Bernard, except themselves; — still his words had given her a sharp pang. How indifferently, how carelessly he had spoken! "She is a charming girl." The words came back to her, and the tone of his voice as he had uttered them, and indignation almost mastered her pain. Then again she said to herself that it was not his fault: he was anxious that people should not, as he said, talk about her, and she supposed it was his way to be soft and gentle and friendly. His friends had spoken of that other girl abroad who had married Captain Davison; but what did it matter to her? why should he not have admired other girls? Only now she would be on her guard, not because of him, or of herself, but because no one should have cause to blame him or her.

CHAPTER X.

THE dusky air was heavy and sweet and damp with the gathering dews of a warm autumn evening: it is a charm quite distinct from the after-glow of summer sunsets, and yet it has an attraction which perhaps nothing in summer can equal. Faintly, very faintly, the stars were beginning to shine forth, and the young moon showed a dim image of herself rising above the woods, whose varied foliage had faded into one soft grey line rising and falling in wavy outline against the sky, hardly distinguishable from it in the waning light. The fallen leaves no longer rustled, but lay damp and soft beneath her feet, as Christina made her rapid way along the avenue under the great lime-trees. And now she was passing down into the Hollow where the White House

lay; she had reached the gate, and for the first time she was roused from her own thoughts, roused to surprise and a sort of vague fear. There was a carriage standing in the road, and the house-door was wide open, and a sound of murmuring voices came to her as she stood for a moment in the garden. Her mother was in the passage with a man, and now she could see that it was the doctor.

"No excitement should be permitted, my dear madam," he was saying pompously, waving his little fat, white hands. "In these cases quiet is all-important. Mr. North is evidently a nervous subject; he should remain quiet until to-morrow. I will call early in the day."

"Oh, what is it?" said Christina, coming up, pale, and with frightened eyes.

"Don't alarm yourself, my dear young lady. It is nothing to alarm yourself about. Your grandpapa is not so young as he used to be, and we must all expect these little accidents as we get on in life. He has had a slight seizure. I have been begging your mamma to preserve absolute quiet in the sick chamber, and I think we may hope to see him much better to-morrow. I will call early," said the little doctor; and then he rubbed his hands together complacently, and trotted away down the garden-walk.

"Why didn't you send for me?" said Christina, unreasonably enough, yet with the remorse so natural when we have been making merry and feasting whilst a misfortune has fallen upon the place we left vacant.

"How could I? Whom could I send?" asked her mother fretfully. "What good could you have done if you had been here? It was all so sudden. They said it was something paralytic. I sent for Dr. Evans, of course, and then by the time he came your grandfather was better and nearly himself, and very angry with me for having sent for him. What could I do? It is nonsense to say that he is not ill. He is ill, very ill indeed; and he may die, though Dr. Evans does like to rub his hands and talk about rest and quiet."

"No; why should he die? Why do you say such things?" said Christina, with impatience; and she went in sadly, and took off her hat and cloak, throwing them down carelessly on the old chest in the hall, and pushed back the hair wearily from her face. How happy she had been in the morning, and how changed it all was now! Yet it was not her grandfather's illness which had wrought the greatest change of all. She went gently into

his room, where he was sitting in an easy-chair. He was striving to look as usual, but there was a strange pallor about his face, and an unnatural stiffness in his attitude.

"I hope you are better, grandpapa," said Christina softly.

"I am no better for seeing that little fool Evans. Why can't a man be left to himself if he does feel a little faint, I wonder? A glass of brandy would have brought me to in a second, if they had had the sense to give it me, instead of moaning and sighing and sending for the doctor. You mind, Christina,—if ever I'm taken like this again, you give me a dram, and don't let any one come near me with a medicine-chest."

"You will be better when it is cooler, grandpapa," said Christina, without answering him directly. "It is so hot to-night;" and she went and put back the curtains from the window, and looked out into the misty twilight.

"I should be better if I had not such a lot of worry," said Mr. North; "it is hard when a man is growing old and he has no son to take his place, and nothing but women about him. It would be very different if you had a brother, or if you were married, Christina."

Christina shivered, and pressed her hands together. "Can't I do anything, grandpapa?" she said, wistfully.

"No, of course you can't; women are of no use except to spend money and get themselves married. But, after all, if you were to be a girl, I'd just as soon have you as any one else; you're not such a fool as some, and you're uncommonly pretty."

He spoke irritably, yet he looked at her with pride.

"Go and see what messes they are getting ready for me, and send Janet up," he said. "Good night, Christina; you are as pale as a sheet."

Christina went down to the parlour, where candles had been lighted and where her mother was sitting, and mechanically took up her work.

"It is something on his mind, I do believe," Mrs. North was saying; he hasn't been himself for weeks, and now the rent has been due this fortnight, and goodness knows where it is to come from. If he could give in and let it rest, we might do it well enough, but he'll never let it be till we are all in the work-house. He won't take a favour even from Mr. Warde, though he is such a friend. Did you see him this afternoon?" said Mrs. North: and, as she asked the question, she laid

down her work and looked a little anxiously at Christina.

"Yes, I saw him," said Christina; and she was too sad at heart to be impatient of the question and of her mother's anxiety: and after that they stiched in silence until the old clock struck ten; then they rose and stole noiselessly up the stairs to their own rooms. But Christina did not go to bed; she put down the candle on the table, and walked restlessly about the room.

She had been strong only because she was proud, and her pride had received a shock; she had said to herself whilst her indignation was still strong within her, that she did not mind, and anger had forced back the tears and deadened the pang; but when she was alone in silence and solitude, when there was nothing to distract her thoughts, she vainly strove to banish her recollections. All but the one thing faded into insignificance: she forgot her anger, and her resolutions, and her pride, and the only thing that remained with her was the consciousness of Captain Cleasby's words and the knowledge which they had thrust upon her. Then she knew that the words of no other man on earth could have mattered so much to her. Again and again as they came back to her this consciousness grew stronger, but yet she would not own it to herself. "It is nothing to me," she said, over and over again, and then she began to think how impossible it was that it should be anything to her. He had been kind and friendly always, and that afternoon he had perhaps been something more. No; why should she think of that afternoon? she knew now that he had not meant it. And then she was pledged to Bernard. Involuntarily she clasped her hands tight together as she thought of it. Why should she not be true? Why should she be afraid? What was there in her relations with Captain Cleasby to make her afraid? He was not like Bernard. Bernard was handsome and eager and upright, and he cared for her; he had cared for her always. And what was Walter Cleasby? He was not handsome, like Bernard; he was slight and pale, and there was no enthusiasm or impetuosity about him; she had never heard him say or do anything remarkable. She said to herself that people would not call him very clever—he had never distinguished himself; he had no public spirit nor active interest in practical matters; he was not even very anxious to do his duty; all his life he had been accustomed to go his own way and wander at his

will, and yet she knew that there was something that made her afraid for herself, only she would not be conquered; she would own to no one that she had cause for fear.

If Miss Cleasby had feared for Christina before, she feared none the less now, though her brother had ridiculed her fears, though he had declared to her seriously that there was no possibility of any attachment on her part. He had assured her that he had not the slightest intention of marrying her or anybody. "I believe it is my marrying that you are so much afraid of," he had said, "for I am sure you think it would be a very bad speculation for anyone to marry me." Then she had answered that she might have had some such thought, but yet that it was not his marrying that she feared most.

"I think any girl you married might be disappointed, Walter," she had said: "but what I fear most is that you will make Christina unhappy; that she may learn to care for you though you do not care for her."

Miss Cleasby was quite aware of her brother's faults, and, though very fond of him, she was blinded by no sisterly partiality. What was it, then, that made her fear for Christina, even as Christina had been forced to fear for herself? He had not the beauty of feature, nor that of high health, and yet there was a force about his slight figure which broader and stronger men lacked: other men's eyes might be larger and finer, but they had not the light which glanced in his; and then his mouth, like his sister's, was beautiful, and there was something peculiar in the sweetness of his smile. Augusta had loved him since he was a little delicate boy in holland blouses, independent, undemonstrative, and gentle; and then she remembered him as a schoolboy, not conceited, but self-reliant and unambitious; and then as a young man abroad, fond of society, and popular, and more or less idle. He never seemed to have exerted himself, and yet he had somehow contrived to learn something of nearly everything. He had done creditably at college; he knew something of music; he could sketch in water colours, and take a likeness; he knew a little botany and geology; and, living so much abroad, he had easily acquired modern languages: what was more, he could talk about everything which he knew, and about some things which he did not know. Perhaps he knew least of theology; yet he would not have been at a loss, dining in company with bishops and divines. At the same time he

never paraded his knowledge; simply he had a capacity for throwing himself into the interests of those around him, and making use of any materials which might come to hand. He had charmed Mr. Gregson by his appreciation of his architectural drawings; he had won Farmer Rawson's heart during the hour he spent walking over his fields with him, discoursing of the crops: and this though he knew next to nothing of architecture or of farming. But perhaps it was with women that he got on best. With elderly ladies there was something about him at once self-reliant and deferential, which gave them a motherly feeling towards him, and he had always been popular with girls. Yet, whilst frankness was not his distinguishing characteristic, there was nothing hypocritical about him. Without being deeply affectionate or easily impressed, he was friendly, unfastidious, and open to kindness. He himself was wont to declare to his sister that he was a sham. "I can appear to know almost anything," he had said. "And to like almost everybody," she had added; but she smiled at him as she said it, and in truth she did not well see how he could be other than he was: there would always be a charm about him which nothing could destroy; and it was all this which made her fear for Christina.

She had lived in the world; she understood its temper without caring much to conciliate it, and could foretell its judgments without greatly respecting them. She had been what people call fashionable; she was now a little tired and *blasée*, but she neither was nor ever had been a worldly woman. Her fear, as she had confessed to her brother, was, not lest he should marry Christina, — though it would have been desirable that his wife should bring him money or connection, she would have been content that he should forego these things in a marriage of captivity, where the charm was one she could herself appreciate and feel, — but, as she had said, she did not believe that he was capable of a serious attachment; nothing in his manner or his words had led her to suppose that any such thing could spring from his intercourse with Christina. He liked her as he liked other pretty girls, only perhaps rather better, because of her ingenuousness and peculiar beauty; and she felt that Christina would not be content with this — at least, she would not be content if the present state of things were to go on much longer. Was it not natural that in her lonely life this new element should create a dangerous stir, and raise a storm which

could not be allayed? She had not thought of it so much before that day of the school-feast; but when the girl came out of her corner in that abrupt, startled way, with her eyes so bright and her cheeks so flushed, and held out her hand to say good-bye, Miss Cleasby had felt it tremble in hers, and all her fears had been strengthened. What had they been saying to her? What had wrought the change? Had Walter gone further than he had meant to go? or had that old Mrs. Gregson interfered to warn her? No; she did not think that possible: Mrs. Gregson would not have been likely to see or hear anything. And yet she ought to be warned, and she had no friend or relation to speak a word or do anything to guard her. She almost wished that she were herself her friend or relation, that she might speak some such word; but the position in which she stood as his sister seemed to make it impossible. Then she thought her that, after all, such considerations ought not to stand in her way: she did not think that she could go straight to the girl herself; but if by some chance she might meet the mother or the aunt, she had almost resolved that she would speak some ambiguous word of warning, which, without compromising her brother or Christina, might serve to make her friends discourage the meetings and constant intercourse. Yet she had formed no distinct plan; she had not as yet met Mrs. North; she did not wish to go to the White House; and if the thing could not be done easily, she was not disposed to make any violent effort to accomplish it. However, fortune favored her. She was driving into Overton the day after that in which Christina had been at the Park, and her brother had asked her to drop some birds at the White House on her way.

"At any rate this is an offering to which old North cannot take exception," he had said; "though I verily believe, poor people, a leg of mutton would be more to the purpose; but the conventionalities forbid one to bestow legs of mutton on one's friends."

And Miss Cleasby had started, driving herself in the pony carriage; and when she drew up at the gate of the White House, Mrs. North was in the garden. Her first instinct had been to draw back; but Miss Cleasby introduced herself so pleasantly, and asked so cordially after the old man, that Mrs. North could not but respond civilly, and she came and stood by the carriage, talking for a few minutes whilst the groom took the birds into the house.

It was not much that she was able to

say; but she asked for Christina, and heard that she was out on the moor, and then there was reference made to her brother, and she owned that he too found the moor very attractive—she was afraid that he idled away a good deal of his time.

"He finds it very dull at home, I am afraid," she said. "You see, Mrs. North, he has never been accustomed to a settled life: we have been such wanderers. But I wish he would stay more at home, or take more interest in the estate, for I do not think it is a profitable employment to be always idling about in the sunshine: it cannot be right for anyone.

"No, indeed, Miss Cleasby; I dare say you feel responsible."

"Not exactly," she said, smiling; "a little, perhaps; but of course brothers always think they know best. It is not as if he were a girl.

And something in her tone suddenly turned Mrs. North's thoughts to her own girl, and she colored, wondering if she had been foolish in leaving her so much to herself, and if this were meant for a warning.

"I don't think being a girl makes any difference in that way," said Mrs. North; and though she was fluttered, and a little agitated, she drew herself up with an attempt at dignity. "I should trust a girl as soon as any young man—indeed sooner than most."

"Yes; only young men are supposed to be able to take care of themselves," said Augusta: and then the groom came back, and there could be no more private conversation, and she drove off after a few more words.

But Mrs. North went back into her house disturbed and heavy at heart. What had Miss Cleasby meant? Surely it had been a warning, and if so there must be a cause for it.

And then there came another caution from another quarter to add to her trouble. Janet, too, had made her observations, and rushed to her conclusions; and she had heard them talking one day in the servants' hail at the Park: "And they do say, ma'am, as young Captain Cleasby thinks a deal on our Miss Christina; but they say as he was always a man for young ladies, and had always some fancy or other in his head." And though Mrs. North had silenced her, and said something angrily about not caring to listen to gossip, she nevertheless was disturbed and dissatisfied.

It would be a real grief to her if, for the sake of a passing girlish fancy which

would never come to anything, Christina should throw away her prospect of a happy and prosperous future under the kind guardianship of such a man as Mr. Warde.

She was timid and vacillating by nature, and she dreaded any collision with Christina, but yet she thought that something must be done and some admonition given; and two days after Miss Cleasby's visit she for the first time touched upon the subject.

Christina had come in with her hands full of flowers. Captain Cleasby had given them to her, she said; he thought they might be a pleasure to her grandfather, if he did not know where they came from.

"And he is not likely to ask," said Christina, carelessly as she put down the flowers on the parlor table and began to arrange them.

Mrs. North was sitting opposite, at her work, and now she stitched more assiduously than ever, and a cloud came over her face, but Christina did not notice it. She had met Captain Cleasby quite casually at her gate, and nothing had passed between them except a few indifferent words, and she had not sought the meeting—indeed of late she had avoided him—not, as she said to herself, because of him or because of herself, but because she would give no one a pretext for talking of her; and somehow she had tried to forget those words which she had overheard, and to persuade herself that they had not mattered to her. So just now she was indifferent and composed, and did not know what was hanging over her.

"Why is Captain Cleasby always idling about here? I think he is a very idle young man. I cannot conceive why he is always coming and going about the house," said Mrs. North, rather nervously.

"I don't know," said Christina, bravely; but she coloured as she spoke.

"I am afraid that I do know," said Mrs. North, contradicting her former assertion. "I am afraid, Christina, that he takes more pleasure in amusing himself with young ladies than in attending to his business. How often I have told you, Christina, that we can have nothing to do with the Cleasbys: his sister says that it has always been his way. I am sure I don't know how it is, but really I am so worried and troubled, what with your grandfather's illness, and th's struggle how to live and one thing and another, that I never thought of it before—not until his sister spoke."

"Never thought of *what* before?" said Christina, almost fiercely: and she stood up and confronted her mother, with the colour deepening in her cheeks, and an indignant light in her eyes.

"Oh, Christina, don't excite yourself, now pray don't! If you had listened to me before,—though to be sure I never thought of it, and I suppose I have been to blame too; only for goodness' sake don't let your grandfather hear of it,—he cannot bear to hear of the Cleasbys."

"Don't let him hear of *what*? What is there to hear of? I don't know what you mean."

"Just this, Christina," said Mrs. North, gathering courage as her difficulties grew upon her; "just this, that people are beginning to say that there is something between you and Captain Cleasby. Janet tells me that the servants said something to her, but I am sure it never occurred to me until his sister herself came here the other day—you know I told you she came on Wednesday with a present of game—and then she said something as if she feared you might fall into some mistake, because of course he means nothing, and perhaps—"

"Do you mean to say," said Christina, with a scornful ring in her voice, "do you mean to say that Miss Cleasby came to warn me through you against her brother? How could she do such a thing? What could you say to her? There is nothing between us."

"Of course it was a mistake; of course there could not be: but you are not just to her; she meant it very kindly. I am sure it was not her brother that she was afraid for, but you."

"And what right has she to be afraid for me? Why should she interfere?"

"Simply this, Christina; that knowing her brother as she knows him, knowing that he cares nothing for you, she seemed to fear that you might be running into danger."

"Stop, mamma. I don't wish to hear anything more about it. Why should Miss Cleasby have come? How could she think herself justified in saying such a thing? Captain Cleasby is nothing to me; she need not have been afraid; I shall never go to their house again."

She threw back her head as she spoke, and pushing away the flowers with a rapid indignant movement, turned and left the room abruptly, leaving them all scattered in disorder upon the table. Mrs. North gave a little sigh of relief when she was gone: at least the thing had been done,

and she need not fear that Christina would ever refer to it again. She did not remember that she had in truth greatly misinterpreted the part Miss Cleasby had taken in the affair; she was not even conscious that she had put her own fears and sentiments into her mouth. The only thing she regretted was Christina's impetuosity, which had disturbed her at the moment; but it was done now, and she had nothing more to fear from it.

In the meantime Christina had gone to her room and locked her door; and now she was sitting before her dressing-table, leaning upon it heavily with both arms, and gazing absently into the mirror.

How strange a change had come over her face since she parted from her mother. She was pale now, and her mouth was firmly shut, and her eyes wide open with the far-off searching look of eyes that gaze into the future. She had been angry for the moment, but now her anger was past. She had thought that the thing need not be spoken of even by herself to herself, and now she knew that others had spoken of it, and that she must face her position, and determine upon a line of conduct. She did not doubt for a moment that his sister was right; that she knew what she was saying, when, as her mother had told her, she had asserted or implied that Captain Cleasby did not—could never care for her. And had she not always known it—except—except just for that one afternoon which would always stand out distinct from all the others which had gone before, from all which should follow after? And then as she looked back to it, she could no longer thrust away the thought that all this stood between her and happiness. She did not know how it had been; she could not tell when it had first come upon her; but she could no longer hope to deceive herself. It was not that he was handsome, or clever, or great in any way; but now she knew that her heart had been given to him; his image rose unbidden before her mind, shutting away from her her old hopes and the future which had lain before her. She was strong and she was brave, and she faced the pain as she sat there in her solitude. Such things cannot be spoken of,—they must be borne alone! A long hour had passed, and she had not moved. She had not meant to be untrue; she had told herself when first she had feared it that it was impossible; she would not allow her fears to conquer her. But now it was no longer a question of fear—the blow had fallen; she was not crushed—the pain

had roused her to fresh strength; but yet she knew that she had been dreaming, that she was now awake, and that she could never dream that dream again—that no other August afternoon would be to her what that past August afternoon had been; that she could marry neither this man whom she loved, nor Bernard who had always loved her: and at the thought of Bernard—of his happy confidence and his near return—tears for the first time rushed to her eyes—tears of gratitude, and penitence, and regret.

CHAPTER XI.

JUST at this time, when Christina could no longer halt between two opinions—when she had made once for all the overwhelming discovery that she was no longer free, yet that she was no longer bound; no longer free to make a choice, no longer mistress of herself, and yet that she must break the bond between her and Bernard, because she could not hope to give him what he required,—just at this time, when, though the one thing remained sure, her mind was yet confused and wavering and uncertain, a new complication arose, and a new element was introduced into her life, which pressed a decision upon her, and made it no longer possible to hesitate as to what she should do.

Mr. Warde had of late been much at the White House. He had listened to Mrs. North's lamentations; he had tried in vain to cheer the old man, or to induce him to take the assistance he would so gladly have offered. They were sinking deeper and deeper into debt, as he well knew. The doctor was told that he was no longer required, because they could not afford the money for his visits; not even Mr. Warde was ever asked to dinner now, and he could not remember when he had seen Christina in a new dress. The daily cares and trials were beginning to tell upon her, he thought, when he noticed that she was paler and more restless and sadder. For some time past there had been, in the deportment or conversation of her mother and grandfather, something to indicate that they had conceived in their secret minds the possibility of a nearer connection with him, and from the time when he observed this, he had begun to entertain the possibility of it in his own mind; and as his sense of the dreariness of her situation grew deeper, there came upon him in more palpable form the thought that he had the power to take her away from all this. Though he could bring help in no other way, at least he could in this, if it

would indeed be for her happiness as well as for his.

He was not in love with her; he had seen her faults clearly enough, but yet he was fond of her: he was pitiful and he was kind, and if it were for her happiness he would gladly have made her his wife. But, then, was it for her happiness? That was the question that he asked himself again and again without obtaining any satisfactory answer. Anything, he thought, would be better than her present life. Was she not even now losing her spirits and her youth, and the bloom of her beauty, in the wearisome round of daily vexation? He saw that she might have lightened her own burthens had she set herself to the work; but first she had been too rebellious, and now he thought she was too sad. But, then, was it not possible that some brighter fate than that he had to offer might be in store for her? Yet how, and where? He thought of her cousin; but surely, if there had been anything more than friendship between them, her mother, his mother, everyone would have known of it. And then he thought of Captain Cleasby, but only for a moment. He knew little of the intercourse that there had been. He did not see with the eyes of girls or women, nor with those of a particularly observant or sagacious man, and it did not appear to him that Captain Cleasby was likely to win a girl's affections unless under favourable circumstances.

His new subjects of reflection did not distract his mind; they did not make his teaching less energetic, nor his ministrations less conscientious; but in his solitary walks, in his lonely evenings, they came across his mind, and urged upon him decisive action.

He was thinking of it all this evening as he sat in his little parlour over the baker's shop. He was sitting there after a hard day's work, with the sort of feeling that he had earned his rest; and at the present moment there was nothing very clerical about his appearance. He had thrown off his coat and his boots, and was leaning back in his chair with his legs crossed, smoking a short pipe; and he was meditative and comfortable, though there was nothing at all luxurious in his surroundings.

It was a little room on the first story, with muslin blinds and a box of mignonette in the window; and there was a round walnut table, with a red cloth cover, where stood the remains of his supper, as he called it,—a jug of ale, the

loaf of bread, some butter, and some cheese. There were bookshelves on each side of the fireplace, filled principally with theological works, for Mr. Warde read little on general subjects, and was quite content to see the *Times* twice a week when he went into Overton. There was a photograph of his mother over the chimney-piece in a black frame, and two prints on each side of it; and there was a large desk where he kept his sermons, on his writing table: and these were his only contributions to the adornment of the room.

Mrs. Jebb, however, the baker's wife, was a good woman, and had every desire to make her lodger comfortable, and she had provided some less serviceable but more ornamental articles of furniture—two glass vases with drops, a shepherd and shepherdess in coloured china, and a little mirror in a tarnished frame. Mr. Warde was not observant of these things, but he had, to her great distress, remorselessly ordered out a small slippery horse-hair sofa, whose elegance constituted her greatest pride and glory.

"If you was to be took bad, sir," she had said, deprecating his mandate that it should be at once removed.

"But I never am bad, Mrs. Jebb," he had answered, good-humouredly; and then, before she could say anything more, he had deposited it bodily in the passage.

Yet, in spite of this, though for the moment she was a little hurt, Mrs. Jebb honoured her clergyman, and would not have exchanged him for a less active and less troublesome lodger.

Christina had been quite right when she had said how much he was liked and respected by all classes of his parishioners. He was not clever, he was not saintlike, nor, strictly speaking, a spiritual-minded man; but he was honest and true, and kind and honourable, a man who would always do his duty, and would generally see his duty clearly. He was not wavering or perplexed even this evening, but he was slowly and surely arriving at a decision upon a point which as yet his judgment had failed to decide for him.

"She shall not be hurried," he had said to himself, "and after all she can always refuse; she is under no compulsion."

He did not expect that she should have fallen in love with him, for he had not fallen in love with her; but if her heart were free, it seemed to him that he might make her happy as his wife, and if her heart were not free, why then she had only to say no.

These had been wearisome days for Christina. First, she had her battle to fight with herself; and the thought of Bernard, so often and so unduly absent from her mind in these latter days, was ever before her now: and then troubles were coming fast upon them, and there seemed to be no way of escape. They owed money, not large sums, but still money that they had no certain prospect of being able to pay; then there was the rent, and of late Mr. North had begun to say that they must leave the White House. They could live nowhere more cheaply; but at least there would not be this obligation to be incurred with regard to Mr. Warde; and they could get some lodging near at hand, and dismiss Janet.

Christina heard it discussed with silent dismay. The White House had not been a happy home; but, nevertheless, there were many old associations which it would be hard to leave behind, and then she knew what a blow it would be to her grandfather, who was even now so weak and failing.

He sat in his loneliness and sadness and anger, dwelling upon his misfortunes, and repelling sympathy. He liked best to be alone, he said; but if Mr. Warde came, he would see him.

"If only we had a man about the house, or if you were married, Christina," her mother said; her lament taking the same form as Mr. North's: "but here we are, and your grandfather so ill, and he may die any day for anything we know; and then, what is to become of us? I am sure I don't know. If only I thought you were cared for, I believe I should not mind anything."

"Why should you mind about me now? I am not afraid."

"Because you don't know what it is to be alone in the world, Christina. You could not stand by yourself—what could you do? You don't know enough to be a governess, and if you did, your grandfather would rather you should die than work for your bread. If only you were provided for, I believe we should both die happy."

Yes, if only she were provided for; no matter how! How dismal it sounded! And Christina took her hat and went out on the moor, less troubled, less restless, less impatient than she had been, but far more quietly despairing.

A few months since she might have told them that they need not fear for her—that at the Homestead, come what might, she would always find a shelter; but now she knew that she was shut out from this

refuge far more effectually than if she had never looked to it as her future home. How could she ask Bernard to receive her as a charity beneath the roof to which he had hoped to bring her as his bride? And she too had shared in his hopes and his projects. "I shall not forget you, Bernard; I shall not change." She remembered her words, and now they came back to her sounding strange and out of season as the singing of birds in the midst of winter. For one moment there flashed across her the possibility of going back, if not in spirit at least in form, to the old footing. To outward appearance it was all as it had been. Who could say that she had been untrue to him? Who could say that she had broken her faith? No one had known of what had been; no one knew how it was now; she need never tell; she had been able, as she thought, to hide it from everyone — why should she not hide it now and for ever? It was a thought, sudden and powerful, like a temptation. She was all alone on the moor, and she sat down and leant her head upon her hand, and looked out over the wide level expanse of heath with bewildered eyes as if seeking for counsel. It was perfectly still — a grey sky overhead, and the brown heath on all sides her, with the lizards darting round about, and the dragon-flies flitting over the pools. There was no counsel to be had, nothing but stillness and solitude; but yet after a few minutes her forehead contracted, her eyes ceased to wander, she clenched her teeth, and rose suddenly to her feet.

"No, no, I cannot do it," she cried to herself. Whatever after sorrows she might have to endure, that temptation was overcome, and could never assail her again. Her mind was made up, and she set out to walk home, for now she was some miles from the White House.

When she reached home, she was pale, tired, and sad; but she was no longer unnaturally agitated or restless; one thread of her complicated and tangled life had been broken and could not be joined again. And though it had brought her much happiness which she must now put aside for ever, though there was much to regret, and a fear of coming trouble, yet was it a relief to know that she need no longer strive to interweave it with the others.

"Christina," said her mother, meeting her in the passage, "where have you been all this time? I have wanted you very much. Your grandfather is better. I think he is dozing. Come in here, my dear; there is no occasion for you to go to him now, and I want to have a little talk with

you. Mr. Warde has been here. He saw your grandfather, and then he came in to me. He would have liked to have seen you if you had been at home; but he said perhaps on the whole it would be better not, and then you might have time to think over it. He was very anxious that you should not be hurried; but, Christina, I think you must have guessed before now. I thought perhaps it might be so — only I was afraid of saying anything — but it is not odd that I should have said this very morning how I wished that you were married, and then this afternoon that he should come and say that he wants to marry you?"

"He wants to marry me!" said Christina very slowly. She had been standing whilst her mother spoke, but now she sat down by the table, and leant her arms upon it, and looked at the opposite wall with eyes that had in them nothing of pleasure or pride, nor yet of fear or shame, but were simply sad and indifferent as to any new thing which she might hear.

"Oh, Christina, I do hope you are not going to be hasty. Just remember what I said to you this morning. You ought to be pleased, I do think. Just think what it will be to your grandfather to know that you are safe and well cared for, and then it will not matter what happens to us. Of course you are surprised at first, but don't look like that! Look at me, Christina, and say that you are pleased."

"Why does he want to marry me?" said Christina; and though she did turn her eyes upon her mother, she did not change colour, and her voice was as coldly indifferent as it had been before.

"He has pitied you for a long time," said Mrs. North; "he has taken such an interest in you. You have often said how much you like and respect him. He is not a very young man, to go into transports; but when you are my age, Christina, you will know that such things mean nothing. I believed in them once, and what has my life been? Yours will be very different, for your happiness will be based, not upon a passing fancy for a pretty face, but upon the enduring affection of an honourable man."

"It is very kind of him," said Christina, more softly; and there was nothing contemptuous or ironical in her tone.

"Yes, it is kind, Christina. You can hardly judge how kind it is now, for you don't understand the burthens of married life. He has spoken to your grandfather, and you can hardly imagine what a change it has made to him. You shall not be hurried, Christina; you shall have time to

think: we will not talk of it any more to-night; but you will remember all that I have said, Christina; and I believe, my child, that you will not disappoint us. Oh, Christina, I would do much to save you from such a life as mine has been!"

There were tears in her eyes as she kissed her child, and they went to Christina's heart: she thought of them more than of her mother's words; and she thought of the pleading look which her grandfather had given her when she wished him good-night. It was a look of entreaty, so opposed to his usual manner, that it could hardly fail to make an impression.

From Blackwood's Magazine.
OLD MAIDS.

MARRIAGE is essentially a secular ordinance, the mode by which Providence has provided for the continuance of the world we live in, and as such its conduct and arrangement are left to the reason and conscience of mankind; revelation, after its first institution, only indirectly dictating on the questions of choice, duty, and obligation. The children of this world marry and are given in marriage. As social life refines itself as men grow better, more religious, holier, this ordinance more fitly prefigures a divine mystery; but still men and women, however religious, are never more children for this world than in this question of marriage. The questions of social equality, fitness of fortune, convenience, and family ties, may be said to come first with every one connected with the contracting parties. The fact that they will spend their time in this world together is the actuating consideration. Even the excellent divine, Dr. Hammond, having turned his thoughts towards matrimony, and fixed in his own mind upon the lady, withheld his declaration upon hearing that a man of greater fortune and pretensions turned his thoughts the same way. And so, as his biographer tell us, he "deposited his conjugal intentions," and she lost a saintly husband. Moral and religious worth, however strongly insisted upon, cannot be entertained as valid reasons for union, until its worldly suitableness is satisfactorily proved. A man under the sway of religious motives, spiritual, a professor, one who preaches self-denial, and to all appearance practises it, does not hesitate to prefer for his daughter a man of good social standing, whom he hopes to be all

right, of whom he knows no harm, who passes creditably, to another of inferior social pretensions, however rooted in the matter, and indeed entirely working with him in the cause he and the world alike assume nearest his heart. It is so—everybody takes it as a matter of course, except perhaps the blighted pretender; and viewing marriage as the ordinance which keeps all the world in its place, we are far from saying that we wish it otherwise. We hardly see how it could be otherwise. It is essential to the happiness of married life that husband and wife should be pairs in social refinements and manners. Nor could we, however we held her soul's interests paramount, advise a woman to overlook marked points of underbreeding, on account of a lover's spiritual zeal and enlightenment. We should counsel her, on the contrary, not to run the risk of finding herself repelled by habits in themselves harmless indeed, and detracting nothing from his eternal prospects, but which, as accompanying him through time, would induce all through her union with him a painful sense of incongruity. Nay, even if his alliance would simply involve her in a change of social intercourse, and fix her in a home where it would be for her happiness to forget the graces and polish of her former life, he must be a man of ten thousand to compensate her in the long-run for what she has lost by what he can give her. While we belong to this world, our happiness is not compatible with the loss of either our own respect or the estimation of others; and, in truth, no woman who has made what the world has a right to call a bad match, one which sinks her to a lower grade, or involves her in what common opinion views as humiliations, can enjoy any serenity of happiness.

Women, as the conservators of order, are as a rule ready both to acknowledge and enforce this law, and to submit themselves to it. Their ambition having no other outlet, a marriage below their pretensions cuts at the very root of hope. But as marriage, as well as suitable marriage, is the opening to her ambition, not to speak of other considerations, this submission not seldom costs her dear. To be married is, with perhaps the majority of women, the entrance into life, the point they assume for carrying out their ideas and aims; and there are not a few women in most circles whose personal claims are not such as to promise them unlimited choice, and who know this so well, that on receiving an offer of marriage they recog-

nize it as an occasion—an opportunity. If such a clear-sighted maiden refuses a pretender to her hand because he does not reach her social standard, she does so alive to the alternative of a future—a life which offers her few honours and small gratitude, in return for the sacrifice she makes to social obligations. For, after all, a man very much in earnest, and uttering flatteries new to unaccustomed ears, may naturally be rejected on the instant with an unforeseen tenderness, exciting a momentary question. We adopt the word sacrifice, for which some apology is due to any single lady who reads this paper, from De Quincey, who is eloquent on the nobility and virtues of the old maids (insulting name he calls it) of England, in whom he recognizes the most highly cultivated women of his day—a patrician class of martyrs, so to say, to the cause of social order. It is apropos to their merit as letter-writers.

“Three out of four of the letters in the mail-bag will be written by that class of women who have the most leisure and the most interest in a correspondence by the post. That class who combine more intelligence, cultivation, and thoughtfulness than any other in Europe—the class of unmarried women above twenty-five—an increasing class; women who, from mere dignity of character, have renounced all prospects of conjugal and parental life, rather than descend into habits unsuitable to their birth. Women capable of such sacrifices, and marked by such strength of mind, may be expected to think with deep feeling, and to express themselves (unless where they have been too much biased by bookish connections), with natural grace.”

This testimony, highly characteristic of its author, and expressing truly one cause for the number of single women to be found in the educated classes, is opposed to the prevailing tone of modern literature. It is under rare and small encouragement from fiction and poetry that a woman wraps herself in the haughty severity of *noblesse oblige*. Among her friends and belongings, indeed, it is an acknowledged social duty; they expect it of her as a matter of course: if a woman can't advance her family or distinguish herself, she can at least spare them the annoyance of inferior connections. But the novelist laughs at her for her pains. The readers of Mr. Trollope's admirable novel, “Dr. Thorne,” which, as far as it has any other design than to interest and amuse its readers, is an attack on the prevalent views on this question, will recall the really pathetic appeal of Miss Gresham of Greshambury to

her cousin and counsellor, the lady Amelia de Courcy, on occasion of her receiving an offer from a member of the firm Gumption, Gazebee, and Gazebee, who is, to be sure, an attorney, though he only does business with peers and commoners of the very highest class. His “manners,” she pleads, “are quite excellent,” his respect unbounded.

“You may say, Amelia, that he is only an attorney, and I believe that he is an attorney; but I am sure you would have esteemed him had you heard the very delicate way in which he expressed his sentiments. . . . I would not certainly, under any circumstances, accept him without consulting you. If I really disliked him, of course there would be no doubt; but I can't say, dearest Amelia, that I do absolutely dislike him, and I really think we should make each other very happy, if the marriage were suitable as regarded both our positions. . . . I don't wish at all to speak of my own feelings,” she repeats with touching iteration; “but if he were not an attorney, he is, I think, the sort of man I should like. He is very nice in every way, and if you were not told, I don't think you'd know he was an attorney; but, dear Amelia, I will be guided by you altogether.”

And dear Amelia, who represents society, does guide her, and pronounces it Miss Gresham's fate to be a victim. She is very sorry to grieve her cousin, but declares it better she should bear the grief of overcoming a temporary fancy than take a step “which some of your friends would certainly regard as disgraceful.” “It is not permitted to us, my dear Augusta,” she adds, “to think of ourselves in such matters. As you truly say, it we were to act in that way what would the world come to?” &c. &c. “It is natural,” she admits, “for girls to wish to marry: those who are weak take the first that comes; those who have more judgment make a selection; but the strongest-minded are, perhaps, those who are able to forego themselves and their fancies, and to refrain from any alliance that does not tend to high principles.” The hapless Augusta remains one of these strong-minded foregoers, and four years after Lady Amelia marries Gazebee herself—this comic sequel, of course, a warning to high-born ladies not to put their destiny in such material matters out of their own keeping. And yet, when all things are said, it would not have been a suitable match, as society is constituted,—and the treacherous Lady Amelia spoke some truths; so long, that is, as there is such a thing as acknowledged rank; and all rank is a thing of degrees. But not only does our author, in the van of liberal opinion,

and with whom the prejudices and social tyrannies of the aristocracy are a favourite theme, thus strike at the root of old prescription; that great innovator the pen is equally active in female hands;—partly in tender pity to the suffering caused by it to gentle natures, and, more recently, in a deliberate rebellion against the sex's conservatism and submission to antiquated laws of caste. Mrs. Gaskell, scarcely to be called an innovator,—in no sense didactic, like her gifted successors,—covers these scruples of caste with a tender ridicule in her incomparable Cranford papers, where all the ladies are so poor, so genteel, so conscious of pretensions ignored by the world; where they all congratulate themselves on their freedom from masculine society, “a man is so in the way in a house;” where Miss Matty is condemned to everlasting spinsterhood by her inexorable sister, who could not submit to the degradation of a brother-in-law who called himself yeoman, and did not allow himself to be addressed as esquire; and where—though this is not strictly to our point—the widow of rank and small means, Lady Glenmire, convulses the whole society by engaging herself to Mr. Hoggins, the country apothecary, who talked loud, wore creaking top-boots, and whom the ladies of Cranford had reason to believe supped on bread, cheese, and beer every night. As we read we confess to some share of the popular sense of propriety outraged; it is unfair to have a title and not to recognize its restrictive obligations. However, the unprecedented step meets with the chronicler's tacit approval. Why should not a pair of mature age please themselves? seems to be the line of argument. Everything can be proved in fiction, and we admit it one of the missions of imagination to accustom society to the idea of social changes; but experience has still its strong counter-case. “What I especially dislike in Kingsley's ‘Yeast,’ says Miss Mitford, “is his making both his humble-born heroes fall in love with young ladies. To be sure he does not actually make them marry, but he shows that *he* (the author) has no objection. Now it has happened to me to see the final issue of two or three of these disproportioned marriages, and I have always found they result in great unhappiness to the inferior—that is, the promoted party.” And this is the common observation; therefore we do not give up our respect for those martyrs to station who keep themselves single for an idea. In fact, without these vestals, society would go down. But it is not

among them that the highest type of old maid is to be found.

Nor is one of Nature's born old maids deserving of this pre-eminence. There are women with whom marriage forms no part of their plan of life. Nature has provided them with a temperament fitted for independence, and benignantly denied them attractions which might have interfered with their vocation. It is said of such women that they ought to be caught young to make tractable wives; but such women fulfil their purpose best single, and in that state only give rise to no regrets of misfit. Take, for example, Miss Priscilla in “Silas Marner,” that picture of burly cheerfulness undisturbed by fine perceptions. She herself, the gentlemen of her acquaintance, and the reader who recognizes the truth of the portrait, must all be of one mind as to her fitness for the calling she chose for herself, and for no other. Witness her satisfaction, not assumed, in her own plainness, and her heedless comprehension of the Miss Gunns in her profession of that satisfaction. “I *am* ugly—there's no denying that: I feature my father's family; but, law! I don't mind; do you?” Witness her native antagonism to the opposite sex: “I've no opinion o' the men, Miss Gunn. I don't know what *you* have. And as for fretting and stewing about what they'll think of you from morning till night, it's a folly no woman need be guilty of if she's got a good father and a good home. As I say, Mr. Have-your-own-way is the best husband, and the only one I'd ever promise to obey.” And, again, her arrogating celibacy to herself as a birthright and vocation, reproaching her pretty sister for sitting on an addled egg (an unpromising choice) for ever: “One old maid's enough out o' two sisters; and I shall do credit to a single life, for God Almighty meant me for it.”

The highest type of old maid has made no sacrifice, nor is she in any sense a victim, for marriage as a state is not necessary to her idea of happiness; but she has none of that antagonism towards half the human race which Miss Priscilla makes her boast: nor is she one who has set herself against marriage, or whom no man has ever wished to marry. She is the woman who has never met with her ideal, and who has never been cunningly persuaded to accept anything short of it.

Every woman with any romance or magnanimity has, so far as she contemplates marriage for herself merely in the abstract, an ideal, or some vague assemblage

of high qualities which stands for such. She can only suppose herself voluntarily linking her fate with another, if that other is a man exceptionally good or noble, or at least distinguished among his fellows. At all events he must be something quite above the common run of men about her. The typical old maid has had this ideal, and been faithful to it: it may be for want of adequate temptation to inconstancy. Some women—the charming woman, for example—have not been allowed to keep their ideal. They have lost sight of it in finding themselves the ideal of some one else. Our typical vestal has never been a charming woman, though she may have many excellent gifts and graces. Women are so made, bappily for men, that gratitude, pity, the exquisite pleasure of pleasing, the sweet surprise of finding themselves necessary to another's happiness (or being flattered into the notion), altogether obscure and confuse the judgment; they either forget their ideal altogether, or think they have found it in the very commonplace mortal who is their choice. But to some women this does not happen. The natural instinct to please is not strong in them. They only care to please where their taste and judgment approve, and their manner is cold or indifferent in general society. There is a French proverb, compounded of resignation and worldly policy, which represents the submission and destiny of the attractive woman: *Quand on n'a pas ce qu'on aime, il faut aimer ce qu'on a*. It is not that the other is deliberately unattractive, but she recognizes no necessity. She does not want to please out of her pale of sympathies; and the alternative has no terrors for her. In fact she has foreseen that a single life is her probable destiny. It is not at all necessary that this unattractiveness should have to do with a conscious want of beauty. A beautiful woman, as far as colour and outline constitute beauty,—but failing in bewitching qualities,—may repel admiration by indifference, and live to glorify the sisterhood to which her manner devotes her; but it is the woman of commonplace exterior and sensitive mind that is most commonly left alone with her ideal. We believe that almost any woman who is not what is called "particular," may marry if she chooses—that is, if she does not speculate upon herself, or share the world's unfavourable view of her personal pretensions. Again, persons of simple character, who don't think much about themselves, but enter cheerfully into the scene around

them, pleased, amused, contented, have an unconscious attractiveness quite independent of laws of beauty. But our typical old maid is not intellectually simple, but complex, however morally she is above worldly schemes for her own settlement in life. The present, except under circumstances of rare occurrence, does not engross her or absorb her interest. She has a mind looking before, after, and about her—unless, indeed, she has benevolent plans of usefulness, which concentrate her attention on some object;—a posture of mind and body, we should say, which further removes woman from her bewitching attitude than any other. Whatever her interests and occupations, her own life, and what she is to make of it, is a present question with her. She does not wait for marriage to solve it; she feels it in her own hands. She has never met her ideal, or, if she has seen what might have been such, she has recognized an impossibility—constituted as she is—which must keep her apart from it. In good time she makes her destiny her choice. She will indeed be nobody's idol. Nobody will love her best. No one will find out graces hid from the common gaze, but which she does not therefore believe non-existent. She will occupy no such place in society as under favouring circumstances she believes she could fill. She will preside over no home, constitute no family centre and guide; she will miss what some, perhaps most women, consider the prizes of life, as well as its work and *raison d'être*. But for all these prosperities she finds in her own case equivalents. She knows—her observation tells her—that the drawbacks to them which other women are blind to, put up with, cheerfully ignore, ride over by a strong will, or by acts she cannot approve, would go far to neutralize them in her case. She perceives, in fact, that these things are not for her. One prosperous, comfortable, and blooming friend, for example, has a husband whose faults and disagreeable qualities would keep her ashamed and miserable. Another lives in ease and wealth, but has no control over the wealth she lives in—has to ask her husband if she wants five pounds for her own purposes, with a chance of being questioned, or even refused. Another, a doting mother, has children whose weak health or unpromising tempers would hold her in gnawing anxiety. Another's time is taken up by pleasures, or cares, or business, which would all be to her an intolerable bondage. The reality of marriage to such a one who has kept to her ideal of perfect union, grand cares, noble

pleasures, and elevated usefulness, presents often a sordid, carking, worrying, threatening aspect. If she had been in the thick of the conflict it would have been otherwise. She would have stood by her order, and habit and duty would have brought their own reward. Nobody would blot out, if they could, the bitter experiences of the deeper affections and emotions, or exchange their poignant joys and sorrows for an even serenity: and these superior pleasures and cares she takes on faith; but still the uncongenialities with her own temperament are most keenly perceived, and naturally this is a growing sentiment. Use makes everything but pain pleasant, and liberty once enjoyed by a temperate and vigorous mind becomes of all good gifts the one most essential to happiness. No wise woman who has for any length of time had the command of her own time and freedom to exercise her own will, and has found her happiness in independence, will give her time and freedom into another's keeping — assuming, of course, that she has means, however moderate, to maintain her in the same way of life. It would not be good for all women — perhaps for most women — to have this undisputed disposal of themselves; but the woman who has shown herself equal to the charge of herself is the woman to do credit to the single state. And in women who settle themselves in all the eligibilities of this condition without dreaming of change, and who are adapted to it by fair health of mind and body, is observable a lasting youthfulness of mind and spirits. Spirits will be but fitful, and liveliness will be forced, so long as women are painfully alive to the passage of Time — as of a power cheating them of their legitimate expectations. People are at the very antipodes of their object who are *anxious* to seem young. The world necessarily judges of age by the register, and a sensible woman, however young she feels, will regulate her conduct toward others by that record. But not the less is she conscious of a spring of youth in herself, an elasticity of spirit, an unforced cheerfulness, not to be discerned in her married compeers. Mothers, wives, widows arrived at mature middle life are cheerful, but it is not the same cheerfulness: there is a memory of tears in it in tender natures, or a resolute forgetting of worries and cares lurking just round the corner, in spirits of a bolder, stronger fibre. The spinster feels young among them who is separated from her former self by none — by fewer, at least — of the harsh breaks and dislocations which make

people feel old. She carries her former self along with her, and can recall no point where the girl ended in the matron. The young find out this unconsciously; and the old maid who has not had the romance knocked out of her by the sad slaveries of life, may be observed to be the confident, referee, adviser, of all the nice girls of her circle. We speak, of course, comparatively. Trial comes to all. But marriage and its consequences give it the keenest edge and most deep and lasting impression. The exterior will always adapt itself to the character and circumstances of the mind that inhabits it; and the old maid, however judicious her taste, will carry about an atmosphere, as it were, of her calling, a virginal over-trimness perhaps, a cheerful, paler colouring than as matron she would have assumed. Something in her face will express the fact that she has no master but her own will, or that she is unsupported by a background of prestige, or that she has unchecked particularities; some not to be defined hint of the "old maidish" may be there; but through it all the countenance of this higher type will have a certain youth about it not due to the fewness of its years. Nothing makes people look older than long subjugation to a selfish, unsympathizing, or what goes by the name of a steady will — a will that checks the play of fancy. A woman may be devoted to her husband; but if she is always planning how to compass her ends, and running her head against the rock of his inflexibility, her face will show traces of the conflict; while the spinster of her own standing holds a crow's-foot and wrinkles still in abeyance from the complacency resultant on mere liberty of action: not but that she has a heart as open to the troubles of others as the matron, and perhaps a wider and more active sympathy; but it must be admitted that sympathy in other's trial, however deep and long sustained, does not inflict on the countenance the permanent lines that the like cares do in our own case.

No circle, we believe, is without some old maid within its observation who will bear out this portrait, however far it is removed from the popular, even indulgent view, of the class which prevails among us. As opposed to the French notion of the *vieille fille* who is found impersonated in Balzac's "Cousine Bette," our literature patronizes the old maid, as a useful creature — not necessarily at all venomous — conveniently without anything to do on her own account, no occupation that may not at once be laid aside at the summons

of relations or neighbours whom custom encourages to send for when they want her, and forget her all the rest of the year; as one of a class whom nature intends for lieutenants, placed by the fact of their leisure in a position to render temporary service on occasions when their help is required, and then to retreat into insignificance till the next opportunity. The vigorous mind, content with its place in the world, strikes root where it is placed, and is shifted not without effort and sacrifice; and our typical old maid, having never passed her days in waiting for what may turn up, but from a girl applied herself to the work that presented itself to her hands, can never be caught in the absolutely disengaged state—like a leech in a bottle—which constitutes an essential condition of the old maid's usefulness in the world's eye.

Strength and early independence of mind are, however, rare characteristics, and, wanting them, the popular ideal presents the old maid in as important a position as she can hold. For, truth to say, some single women fit their narrow sphere for the opposite reason, that they are never useful. Though they have excellent abstract qualities, it seems an accident of their organization that they never answer to any current, existing demand. Nobody, whether man or woman, has ever found them the very thing they want. However great the emergency, it never calls them out. Through no distinct selfishness or awkwardness they miss the gifts of helpfulness and resource, and are content to be shelved among things out of use. In fact, it is part of their incapacity that they never recognize an opening or a call, and can see the busiest at their wits' end without any personal application. Sometimes in a family of sisters the one old maid will be of this type, the last to be called to mind in cases of sickness and difficulty, and yet for no very obvious reason.

Of course, in talking of old maids, we do not include women of large fortune, who may be anything they please. No woman with a few thousands a-year will have to complain of want of opportunities of changing her condition, want of position, or want of respect; nor will she be the first to occur to the distracted mother's mind whose dozen children are taken with the measles at once as the person to come and help in the nursing, and sit up with baby. People with money are always supposed to have something to do. Importance implies a certain sort of occupation. But strength is relative. No woman with-

out a certain independence and force of character is fit to be an old maid. There are feeble women who might make passable wives, but who make deplorable old maids: they are wretched single, and impart some of their wretchedness to all who have to do with them: they trail for want of a prop, and lie huddled like some unlucky creeper, an unshapely heap, for want of the vigorous stem that should hold it up. Such women cannot believe they are not to be married some day. Somebody to love, to be afraid of, to look up to, to swear by, some duties imposed by necessity, do strike the observer as such a necessity for their well being or even creditable existence, that the life-long attitude of expectation, however hopeless, is almost justified. Women of this character have probably had many fair opportunities of settling in life,—feebleness in girlhood not seldom takes an attractive form;—but perhaps no one to compel them to a decision; and there is wanting to this temperament the powers of falling genuinely in love, as well as of coming to a fixed resolve. Life is all expectation with the feeble woman; she recoils from a final step, and would as likely as not still slip out of an engagement which she had stimulated all her small despairing energies to bring to a point. The beauty who, in vulgar phrase, has overstood her market, does not make an amiable old maid. She feels her life has been a mistake, and is soured accordingly. There is something in the possession and consciousness of beauty which interferes with the frank bestowal of the affections. The woman who is made to understand by all the world that she is handsome, acquires a notion of duty to her claims which supersedes and puts the appeals of the heart out of countenance. She is afraid of wasting her advantages, and asks herself at critical moments. Can I do better? For a brief year or two all the world lies within the grasp of her elated fancy. When the niece in the play asks her aunt why she never married, the answer is, "My dear, I was very cruel thirty years ago, and nobody asked me since." Such reverses sharpen alike features and temper. The ladies haunted by these regrets are a bugbear to their kindred; even their kindnesses have a sting in them: there is something irritating to them in other people's success and happiness; the trials of married life would have left them more amiable.

On the other hand, there are many women clearly unfitted for married life by certain not necessarily serious disqualifi-

cations. Eccentricity is one of these. Eccentricity is not a concealable quality. It must show itself and be conspicuous, and had best indulge itself without implicating others in its manifestations. An eccentric old maid may well have friends who value her, and put up with her singularities, or, more than put up with them, find amusement in them, and a certain freshness. It is her way; it supplies good stories behind her back. The house may be ordered by her own whim rather than by custom. Her dress may be queer, her voice loud, her language marked by anomalies, her contempt of convention may be carried to an extreme, her likes and dislikes may be unaccountable under ordinary principles, and vehemently maintained. She may have her fits of silence, of exaltation, or excitement,—in fact, any startling divergence from received usage,—and yet not sin against any law but usage, and make a very happy and creditable old maid. But the husband of an eccentric woman must suffer and lose in social estimation: the oddities which amuse the world crush or exasperate his spirit. A woman who will say whatever comes into her head, and singles out her husband before a large company as witness or subject of her remarks, reduces him to a most unenviable position. His only resource is silence and insignificance, to look as small as he feels, and shrink into the background, and wonder in his heart why by a voluntary act he ever exposed himself to such miseries. Nor does even silence—a reserved eccentricity—make the subject of it more desirable as a wife. It is as strong an outrage against custom to invite friends and then forget them, or deliberately to absent herself, as to startle them by singular opinions, strange arrangements, or absurd costume. The woman who does not mean to conform to the rules of society should keep single. The woman who calls herself *odd*, as though to be odd and original were the same thing, should hold by her self-estimate, and keep odd in every sense.

As a rule, we believe that women who give themselves up to literature are happiest single, especially if their turn is authorship. We believe there are so many distinguished examples opposed to our view that we express ourselves with diffidence. But on the rule that no writing is worth much that does not occupy the freshest hours, and embody the freshest thoughts of the writer, it follows by a sort of necessity that husband, children, household, must be either rivals of the inventive faculty, or sufferers by it. We doubt also,

how far a mind mainly occupied either by its own powers of invention or some absorbing subject or pursuit can stand in woman's social position as converser, can adapt itself readily, take up another's tone, turn itself to common interests as keenly. Duty will make a woman attend to all the concerns that depend upon her, but not lovingly. She misses the pride and satisfaction of success in a conjugal sphere. Her household is hard work—an interruption, and she is conscious of not succeeding as well or as gracefully as another who finds it her vocation, and recognizes it in the business of her life. However, we are treading an a battle-field of conflicting opinions, from which we would keep clear.

It has been one of the achievements of spinsterhood to advance the cause of education, to make women as a body less ignorant, to infuse into them at least some smattering of intellectual accomplishment; and this was done under an amount of discouragement which constitutes the blue-stocking a true if somewhat obtrusive martyr to the cause of mind. Men of all time have received woman's first efforts to learn with ridicule at the best, often with censure, for presumption in stepping out of her sphere. Wits, satirists, and moralists have agreed in snubbing her struggles to read and to know something of the studies and the questions which interest men. It has needed a strong heart and some obstinacy of resolution to stand against the current of social opinion. What wonder that some awkwardness of self-assertion should disfigure the creditable industry of application, the real love of knowledge, which could pursue it under the joint opposition of all men and the great body of women? There is no doubt that the sex have been gainers; but the shifts and necessities of the conflict reduced their champions to some modes of strengthening their position which had their disadvantages. What could would-be learned women do under the circumstances but form themselves into coteries?—and the strength of a coterie consists in extolling its members up to the skies, and seeing nothing beyond itself. There certainly were women in the blue-stocking days who talked oracularly, and believed they pretty well knew all that was worth knowing in the line they devoted themselves to. We do not know any fairer portrait of this character than we find in the following letter of Charles Lamb to Coleridge. His Miss B— is a typical blue-stocking, and, as such, best single. In spite of her prag-

matical turn, her narrow positiveness, her self-display, her deadness to the genius she was snubbing, we recognize a very respectable old maid, with resources which would not forsake her through life; but we would not be the husband of so much learning, to be edified day by day with third-rate literature, and cut-and-dried criticisms and opinions. We make no apology for the length of so pleasant an example of his characteristic manner:—

"I came home t'other day from business, hungry as a hunter, to dinner, with nothing. I am sure, of the author but hunger about me, and whom found I closeting with Mary but a friend of this Miss W—, one Miss B— or B—y; I don't know how she spells her name. I just came in time enough, I believe, luckily to prevent them from exchanging vows of eternal friendship. It seems she is one of your author-esses that you first foster and then upbraid us with—but I forgive you. Well, go she would not, nor step a step over our threshold, till we had promised to come and drink tea with her next night. I had not seen her before, and could not tell who it was that was so familiar. We went, however, not to be impolite. Her lodgings are up two pair of stairs in — Street. Tea, coffee, and macaroons—a kind of cake I much love. We sat down. Presently Miss B— broke the silence by declaring herself quite of a different opinion from Disraeli, who supposes the differences of human intellect to be the mere effect of organization. She begged to hear my opinion. I attempted to carry it off by a pun upon organ, but that went off very flat. She immediately conceived a very low opinion of my metaphysics; and turning round to Mary, put some questions to her in French, possibly having heard that neither Mary nor I understood French. The explanation that took place occasioned some embarrassment and much wondering. She then fell into an insulting conversation about the comparative genius and merits of all modern languages, and concluded with asserting that the Saxon was esteemed the purest dialect in Germany. From thence she passed into the subject of poetry, where I, who had hitherto sat mute and a bearer only, humbly hoped I might put in a word to some advantage, seeing that it was my own trade in a manner. But I was stopped by a round assertion that no good poetry had appeared since Dr. Johnson's time. It seems the Doctor has suppressed many hopeful geniuses that way by the severity of his critical strictures in his *Lives of the Poets*. I here ventured to question the fact, and was beginning to appeal to *names*, but I was assured that 'it was certainly the case.' Then we discussed Miss More's book on education, which I had never read. It seems Dr. Gregory, another of Miss B—'s friends, had found fault with one of Miss More's metaphors. Miss More had been at some pains to vindicate herself—in the opinion of Miss B—, not without success. It

seems the Doctor is invariably against the use of broken or mixed metaphor, which he rebukes against the authority of Shakspeare himself. We next discussed the question whether Pope was a poet. I find Dr. Gregory is of opinion he was not, though Miss Seward does not at all concur with him on this. We then sat upon the comparative merits of the ten translations of 'Pizarro,' and Miss B— advised Mary to take two of them home; she thought it might afford her some pleasure to compare them *verbatim*, which we declined. It being now nine o'clock, wine and macaroons were again served round, and we parted with a promise to go again next week, and meet the Miss Porters, who, it seems, have heard much of Mr. Coleridge, and wish to meet us because we are *his* friends. I have been preparing for the occasion. I crowd cotton into my ears. I read all the reviews and magazines of the past month, against the dreaded meeting, and I hope by these means to cut a tolerable second-rate figure."

There are many old maids who might have made excellent wives, who yet find their best place in single life as social links and enliveners of monotonous circles. These are the women of many friends, who have that power of self-adaptation that they never lose their fitness for change of scene and habits, and can grow old in visits, welcome wherever they go. Some conditions are, in a degree, necessary to this existence; tolerable health and activity, freedom from oddities of person or manner, quiet, unobtrusive cheerfulness, and few scruples. Tact, of course, is essential, and facility of falling into new ways, and into everybody's tastes and amusements. The visitor must be a good narrative-talker, not given to much speculation on motives, which makes people formidable; but, far above all, she must be a good sympathetic listener, taking up the thread of interests she finds in the ascendant, and judicious in comment and suggestion. In addition to all this, it is well for her to have taste in dress for the benefit of others, and to dress well herself for her own self-respect, and to be so far independent in her own circumstances, that she need never accept an invitation because it is convenient to do so, or give her entertainer the notion he is conferring a pecuniary favour.

There are persons in the position of old maids who ought not fairly to be classed among them—where, for instance, there has been an engagement of sufficient standing to test the reality and constancy of affection, and that surrender of will and independence into another's keeping, which constitutes the sentiment of marriage. Nor does the woman who remains single

for the sake of father or brother, who shares his interests and his confidences, come quite under the category. Her intellectual relations with man are rather after the conjugal type; she escapes many of the bitternesses of woman left to herself, and, on the other hand, she is less mistress of herself.

The unamiable old maid is too stock a character in satire and fiction to need analysis here. We doubt much whether a spiteful old maid is not best as she is. Spitefulness, as a quality, is not engendered by celibacy; it belongs to the character, and is to be found quite as venomous in married life, where perhaps it does more mischief. An ill-natured mother perpetuates herself in narrow, illiberal gossiping children. Not, of course, that the unrestrained talk that idle women sometimes allow themselves — the brooding over the doings of friends, relations, and neighbours — does not often issue in unfair judgments and worse things, but it does equally so with men. False rumours and scandalous reports, the devising evil and the pleasure in listening to it, the whole brood of malignancy, own no sex. It is the lesser power in women to find issue for their execrations, constituting them objects of contempt, which has fastened the epithet spiteful on the spinster. What, perhaps, the single life is often answerable for, is the chatter in which some women pass their lives. We suppose that nothing can equal the dilution to which human converse may be reduced, by two women spending their lives together with nothing to do. The flux of words, the repetitions, the perpetual harpings on worn-out topics, set off by a forced cheerfulness, which keeps up the flow, as it were, to prove to themselves and outsiders that they are content with their condition, finds no parallel elsewhere. Mothers and wives can't help having some business to be attended to. Single women often have no obvious duties that the world can lay its finger upon. They can only talk.

There have been a great many speculations on the number, large and increasing, of the class which has been our topic. We have no doubt that growing refinement is one great cause of this increase. In the working classes, where congeniality of tastes is little thought of, an old maid is a rarity, though the proportions of the sexes must be the same. Marriage even among the less fastidious of a higher class, cannot now be owned the one object of life, as it was understood to be on all hands a hundred and fifty years ago. Could an author

of Addison's standard of delicacy report an offer of marriage in this day as he does with such hearty approval, where the young gentleman, after paying his court to the haughty beauty, and getting only severe looks and distant civilities for his pains, turns to her plain sister Daphne, and with the preliminary that he has something to say to her that he hopes she would be pleased with, begins, "Faith, Daphne, I'm in love with thee, and despise thy sister immensely!" Daphne laughs, but snaps at the proposal, while the father congratulates himself on the turn of affairs, having now no care but for his beauty, which he thought he could carry to market at his leisure. "I do not know anything," the author good-naturedly adds, "that has pleased me so much a great while as this conquest of my friend Daphne's." In the fragment of a story — "The Watsons" — lately published in "The Life of Jane Austen," is a conversation on this subject between two sisters, which indicates the advance of feeling, the awakening to a higher sense of the relation of marriage which intellectual pursuits were bringing about in Miss Austen's own day. We see this growing nicety at once through the authoress and her characters. The passage altogether is as true to nature as happily expressed, as distinctively marked by her peculiar vein as anything she committed to publicity; but something in it shocked her sense of dignity or refinement. She would not let a woman she cared for commit herself to the sentiment expressed. It was true to life, but she did not care to betray it. It is where the elder sister, who personates the lower view of marriage, remarks upon the younger girl's refinement as an unfamiliar quality acquired away from her natural home — as a romantic sentiment sure to militate against the solid practical happiness of life. Elizabeth, the elder, had been confiding to Emma, the younger the disappointment of her life. A certain Tom Purvis had at one time paid her great attention, till the arts of a second sister, Penelope, had driven him from her — arts futile as regards the treacherous sister, but successful in mischief. Emma warmly sympathizes, and suggests some benevolent interpretations of the unknown Penelope's conduct.

"You do not know Penelope. There is nothing she would not do to get married. She would as good as tell you so herself. Do not trust her with any secrets of your own; take warning by me, do not trust her: she has her good qualities, but she has no faith, no honour, no scruples, if she can promote her own advant-

age. I wish with all my heart she was well married. I declare I had rather have her well married than myself !

"Than yourself ! yes, I can suppose so. A heart wounded like yours can have little inclination for matrimony !"

"Not much indeed — but you know we must marry."

"I could do very well single for my own part."

"A little company and a pleasant ball now and then, would be enough for me, if one could be young for ever; but my father cannot provide for us, and it is very bad to grow old and be poor and laughed at. I have lost Purvis, it is true; but very few people marry their first loves. I should not refuse a man because he was not Purvis. Not that I can ever quite forgive Penelope."

"Emma shook her head in acquiescence."

Penelope, Elizabeth goes on to tell her, has her troubles too. She is supposed to be trying to make a match at Chichester, with a rich old Dr. Harding, but she keeps her own counsel, saying, truly enough, "Too many cooks spoil the broth."

"I am sorry for her anxieties," said Emma, "but I do not like her plan or her opinions. I shall be afraid of her. She must have too masculine and bold a temper. To be so bent on marriage, to pursue a man merely for the sake of situation, is a sort of thing that shocks me; I cannot understand it. Poverty is a great evil; but to a woman of education and feeling it ought not, it cannot be the greatest. I would rather be a teacher in a school (and I can think of nothing worse) than marry a man I did not like."

"I would rather do anything than be a teacher at a school," said her sister. "I have been at school, Emma, and know what a life they lead. You never have. I should not like marrying a disagreeable man any more than yourself; but I do not think there are many very disagreeable men; I think I could like any good-humoured man with a comfortable income. I supposed my aunt brought you up to be rather refined."

"Indeed I do not know. My conduct must tell you how I have been brought up. I am no judge of it myself. I cannot compare my aunt's method with any other person's, because I know no other."

"But I can see in a great many things that you are very refined; I have observed it ever since you came home; and I am afraid it will not be for your happiness. Penelope will laugh at you very much."

This is what education and a more refined public opinion have done for women: they have enlarged their perception of disagreeable men, and taught them to prefer their own company to the society of the vulgar, ill-tempered, or illiterate. They

do not lay themselves out to please such men as indeed the Penelopes shown up by the fragment will always do, but not such women as the Elizabeth who utters these sentiments. It is clearly less intolerable to woman to be an old maid that it has been; the single life for her has never had such a "good time" as now; and as this fact becomes patent, certain prevalent characteristics open to unfavourable criticism may become modified, softened, or even disappear altogether. The time may even come when you will not detect an old maid with her gloves on, but the era is probably far distant. It cannot be denied that marriage so far is a finer school for manner than celibacy. No manner can be excellent that is not self-possessed; but self-possession needs in ordinary intercourse, for its perfect expression, the double consciousness of self-respect and an acknowledged position. Manner is a complex product. As old Massey says, there are two sorts of opinion — the opinion a man has of himself, and the opinion the world has of him. The wife is at one with the world; she feels herself a citizeness, a transmitter of its traditions. The old maid knows herself in the world's eye a cipher — her self-possession wants the world's backing. In some it degenerates into self-assertion, and in many it fails altogether. The married woman can take herself for granted. Society interferes with this ease of assurance in the single woman; hence the liveness, the allusion, the consciousness of some manners, or, in fear of these errors, the self-restraint, the stiffness, the conventional rigidity. A good manner perfects itself towards early middle life. It takes its highest polish where the woman has a fixed present and future — she has "settled," in homely phrase. But whatever a woman's own state of feeling, no woman has settled in the world's eye until she has married, or is past speculating upon, and her ways are moulded by habit into the form they must keep to the end.

Marriage may be regarded in two aspects, — as gaining a congenial companion for life, or offering a basis of operations. Holding the one view, a woman is much more likely to end her life single than in the other. There is much to be said for both views. The woman who feels powers and impulses in herself that a single life would allow no field for, does not deserve our censure for accepting what she holds to be a call towards the duties to which she feels herself born, though she has to arrive at them through a medi-

un accepted as such, rather than as offered as a perfect marriage of two minds. A woman may accept a worthy man for a husband though she is not in love with him. The Bible nowhere bids her look about, or even wait for the best man. It asserts principles, and leaves them to operate; but it regards marriage under what we will call the sensible view — that which consolidates states and families. Sentiment is left to evolve itself gradually as man advances in refinement. Of these two classes of women, the one that marries respectably is called by the consent of mankind *fortunate*; the one that misses her ideal, or from any cause remains unchosen, is assumed "the less fortunate of her sex." Nor is the epithet misapplied, as certainly she is endowed with fewer of the gifts of fortune than her wedded sister. But this difference is one apt very sensibly to diminish with years. Whatever the advantages of the bride, the balance of the account may very likely be on the other side at fifty or three score. Many an old maid blesses her lot as she compares it with that of her married com-

peers, and sees what the gay husbands of their youth have turned into under the attrition of years — sees them in all the helplessness, peevishness, and exacting discontent of unwelcome, unlovely old age. She speculates perhaps on the short-lived nature of attraction. Two young people meet, bright, youthful, debonair; a sense of fitness strikes not head but fancy. If they are thrown much together, the fancy matures into a liking from mere propinquity; and so these people, with little really in common, have come to pass their lives together, and are now wearing them out in contact rather than agreement. She recalls, perhaps, similar encounters in her youth to which circumstance and occasion did not lend their aid. Chance brings before her some transient fancy of her girlhood, and she shudders to think what might have been! Compensation, that great harmonizer of lots, and rectifier of fortune's caprices, has no wider field, no greater triumphs, than in equalizing the amount of happiness in the two states of life we have been discussing.

FROM THE CHINESE.

Who would enter honour's door
Must possess the Graces four;
For his *mind* must hoard a store
Out of ancient classic lore;
For his *body*, he must know
How to manage horse and bow;
For his *fancy*, he must tread
River's bank and mountain's head;
For his *temper*, must repeat
Poet's songs with music sweet.

SIR JOHN BOWRING.

It is reported that the Emperor of Russia is projecting the junction of the Black Sea with the Caspian by a short canal connecting the Manutch, an eastern tributary of the Don, with the Kerma, a river running into the Caspian. The total length of the communication will be 680 versts, or 90 German miles; but the length of the canal will be only about one German mile. The piercing of the mountain which separates these rivers will, however, be an engineering work of gigantic magnitude, and is calculated to require the labours of 82,000 workmen for six years, and to cost 81,000,000 roubles.

The members of the Australian Eclipse Expedition, if they were unsuccessful in the primary object of their voyage, saw some strange things along the shores to the north of the great continent of Australia. Mr. Foord tells a wonderful story, "amply attested by witnesses," of a fish with four hands. This extraordinary creature was found crawling on a piece of coral dredged up from the bottom of the sea. "The body was that of a fish," says Mr. Foord before the Royal Society on January 22, "but wonderful to relate, it had in the place of fins four legs terminated by what you might call hands, by means of which it made its way rapidly over the coral reef. When placed on the sky-light of the steamer, the fish stood up on its four legs, a sight to behold! It was small, and something like a lizard, but with the body of a fish!" It is to be hoped that a full and scientific description of this latest marvel of deep-sea dredging may soon be published, as the specimen appears to have been brought back to Melbourne. Mr. White, too, of the same Expedition, tells strange tales about the rats. "The little island," he said, "upon which we pitched our tent was overrun with them, and what was most extraordinary, they were of every colour from black to yellow, and some tortoise shell!"

From Blackwood's Magazine.
THE MAID OF SKER.

CHAPTER LXIII.

POLLY AT HOME.

LEST any one should be surprised that Sir Philip Bampfylde could have paid two visits to this delightful neighbourhood, without calling on our leading gentleman, and his own fellow-officer, Colonel Lougher—in which case the questions concerning Delushy would have been sifted long ago—I had better say at once what it was that stopped him. When the General thought it just worth while, though his hopes were faint about it, to inquire into the twisted story of the wreck on our coast, as given by the celebrated Felix Farley; the first authority he applied to was Coroner Bowles, who had held the inquest. Coroner Bowles told him all he knew (half of which was wrong, of course, by means of Hezekiah) and gave him a letter to Anthony Stew, as the most active and penetrating magistrate of the neighbourhood. Nothing could have been more unlucky. Not only did Stew baffle my desire to be more candid than the day itself, by his official browbeating, and the antipathy between us—not only did Stew, like an over-sharp fellow, trust one of the biggest rogues unhung—in his unregenerate dissenting days, and before we gave him six dozen, which certainly proved his salvation—I am sorry to say such things of my present good neighbour, 'Kiah; but here he is now, and subscribes to it) Hezekiah Perkins, whose view of the shipwreck, and learned disquisition on sand, misled the poor Coroner and all of the Jury, except myself, so blindly, that we drowned the five young men, and smothered the baby—not only did Stew, I say, get thus far in bewilderment of the subject, but he utterly ruined all chance of clearing it, by keeping Sir Philip from Candleston Court!

If you ask me how, I can only say, in common fairness to Anthony Stew (who is lately gone, poor fellow, to be cross-examined by somebody sharper even than himself—one to whom I would never afford material for unpleasant questions, by speaking amiss of a man in his power—especially when so needless), in a word, to treat Stew as I hope myself to be treated by survivors, I admit that he may not have wished to keep Sir Philip away from the Colonel. But the former having once accepted Stew's keen hospitality, and tried to eat fish (which I might have bettered, had I known of his being there) felt, with

his usual delicacy, that he ought not to visit a man at feud with the host whose salt—and very little else—he was then enjoying. For Mrs. Stew was more bitter of course than even her husband against Colonel Lougher, and roundly abused him the very first evening of Sir Philip's stay with them. So that the worthy General passed the gates of the excellent Colonel, half-a-dozen times perhaps, without once passing through them.

Enough about that; and I need only say, before returning to my own important and perhaps sagacious inquiries in Devonshire, that the news, so hastily blurted out by Captain Rodney Bluett, caused many glad hearts in our parish and neighbourhood; but nevertheless two sad ones. Of these one belonged to Roger Berkrolles, and the other to Moxey Thomas. The child had so won upon both these, not only by her misfortunes and the way in which she bore them, but by her loving disposition, bright manner, and docility, that it seemed very hard to lose her so, even though it were for her own good. Upon this latter point Master Berkrolles, when I came to see him, held an opinion, the folly of which surprised me, from a man of such reading and history. In real earnest he laid down that it might be a very bad thing for the maid, and make against her happiness, to come of a sudden into high position, importance, and even money. Such sentiments are to be found, I believe, in the weaker parts of the Bible, such as are called the New Testament, which nobody can compare to the works of my ancestor, King David; and which, if you put aside Saint Paul, and Saint Peter (who cut the man's ear off, and rejected quite rightly the table-cloth) exhibit to my mind nobody of a patriotic spirit.

As for Moxey, she would not have been a woman if she had doubted about the value of high position, coin of the realm, and rich raiment. Nevertheless she cried bitterly that this child, as good as her own to her, and given her to make up for them, and now so clever to see to things, and to light the fire, and show her the way Lady Bluett put her dress on, should be taken away in a heap as it were, just as if the great folk had minded her. She blamed our poor Bunny for stealing the heart of young Watkin, who might have had the maid (according to his mother's fancy) with money enough to restock the farm, now things had proved so handsome. As if everybody did not know that Bardie would never think twice of Watkin; while his mother, hearing of the ships I had

taken (as all over the parish reported), had put poor Watkin on bread and water, until he fell in love with Bunny! However, now she cried very severely, and in a great measure she meant it.

Leaving all Newton, and Nottage, and Sker, and even Bridgend to consider these matters, with a pleasing divergence of facts and conclusions, I find it my duty, however repugnant, to speak once more of my humble self. In adversity, my native dignity and the true grandeur of Cambria have always united, against my own feelings, to make me almost self-confident, or at any rate able to maintain my position, and knock under to nobody. But in prosperity, all this drops; extreme affability, and my native longing to give pleasure, mark my deportment towards all the world; and I almost never commit an assault.

In this fine and desirable frame of mind I arrived at Narnton Court once more, sooner perhaps than Captain Bluett, having so much further to go, burst in on his friends at Candleston; although I have given his story precedence, not only on account of his higher rank, but because of the hurry he was in. On the other hand, my part seemed to be of a nice and delicate character—to find out all that I could without making any noise in the neighbourhood, to risk no chance, if it might be helped, of exciting Sir Philip Bampfylde, and, above all things, no possibility of arousing Chowne, till the proper time. For his craft was so great that he might destroy every link of evidence, if he once knew that we were in chase of him; even as he could out-fox a fox.

When things of importance take their hinge, a good deal, upon feminine evidence, the first thing a wise man always does is to seek female instinct, if he sees his way to guide it. And to have the helm of a woman, nothing is so certain as a sort of a promise of marriage. A man need not go too very far, and must be awake about pen and ink, and witnesses, and so on; but if he knows how to do it, and has lost an arm in battle, but preserved an unusually fine white beard, and has had another wife before, who was known to make too little of him, the fault is his own if he cannot manage half-a-dozen spinsters.

My reputation had outrun me—as it used to do, sometimes too often—for in the despatches my name came after scarcely more than fifty, though it should have been one of the foremost five; how-

ever, my wound was handsomely chronicled, and with a touch of my own description, such as is really heartfelt. Of course it was not quite cured yet, and I felt very shy about it; and the very last thing I desired was for the women to come bothering. Tush! I have no patience with them; they make such a fuss of a trifle.

But being bound upon such an errand, and anxious to conciliate them so far as self-respect allowed, and knowing that if I denied myself to them, the movement would be much greater, I let them have peeps, and perceive at the same time that I really did want a new set of shirts. Half-a-dozen of damsels began at once to take my measure: and the result will last my lifetime.

But, amid all this glorification, whenever I thought of settling, there was one pretty face that I longed to see, and to my mind it beat the whole of them. What was become of my pretty Polly, the lover of my truthful tales, and did she still remember a brave, though not young, officer in the Navy, who had saved her from the jaws of death, by catching small-pox from her? These questions were answered just in time, and in the right manner also, by the appearance of Polly herself, outblushing the rose at sight of me, and without a spot on her face, except from the very smart veil she was wearing. For she was no longer a servant now, but free and independent, and therefore entitled to take the veil, and she showed her high spirit by doing this, to the deep indignation of all our maid-servants. And still more indignant were these young women, when Polly demeaned herself, as they declared, with a perfectly shameless and brazen-faced manner of carrying on towards the noble old tar. They did not allow for the poor thing's gratitude to the only one who came nigh her in her despairing hour and saved her life thereby, nor yet for her sorrow and tender feeling at the dire consequence to him; and it was not in their power, perhaps, to sympathize with the shock she felt at my maimed and war-beaten appearance. However, I carried the whole of it off in a bantering manner, as usual.

Still, there was one resolution I came to, after long puzzling in what way to cope with the almost fatal difficulty of having to trust a woman. So I said to myself, that if this must be done, I might make it serve two purposes—first for discovery of what I sought, and then for a test of the value of a female, about whom I had serious feelings. These were in no

way affected by some news I picked up from Nanette, or, as she now called herself, "The widow Heavyside." Not that my old friend had left this world, but that he gave a wide berth to the part containing his beloved partner. She with a French-woman's wit and sagacity saw the advantage of remaining in the neighbourhood of her wrongs: and here with the pity now felt for her, and the help she received from Sir Philip himself, and her own skill in getting up women's fal lals, she maintained her seven children cleverly. After shedding some natural tears for the admired but fugitive Heavyside, she came round, of course, to her neighbours' affairs; and though she had not been at Narnton Court at the time when the children were stolen, she helped me no little by telling me where to find one who knew all that was known of it. This was a farmer's wife now at Burrington (as I found out afterwards), a village some few leagues up the Tawe, and her name was Mrs. Shapland.

"From her my friend the Captain shall decouper the everything of this horrible affair," said Nanette, who now spoke fine English. "She was the—what you call—the *bonne*, the guard of the leetle infants. I know not where she leaves, some barbarous name. I do forget—but she have one cousin, a jolly girl, of the leetle name—pray how can you make such thing of 'Mary'?"

"What, do you mean Polly?" I asked: "that is what we make of Mary. And what Polly is it then, Madame?"

"Yes, *Paullee*, the *Paullee* which have that horrible pest that makes holes in the faces. '*Verole*' we call it. The *Paullee* that was in the great mansion, until she have the money left, the niece of the proud woman of manage. You shall with great facility find that *Paullee*." Of course I could, for she had told me where I might call upon her, which I did that very same afternoon.

And a pretty and very snug cottage it was, just a furlong, or so, above the fine old village of Braunton, with four or five beautiful meadows around it, and a bright pebbly brook at the turn of the lane. The cottage itself, even now in November, was hung all over with China roses, and honeysuckle in its second bloom, which it often shows in Devonshire. And up at the window, that shook off the thatch, and looked wide-awake as a dog's house, a face, more bright than the roses, came, and went away, and came again, to put a good face upon being caught.

Hereupon I dismissed the boys, who with several rounds of cheers, had escorted me through Braunton; and with genuine thankfulness I gazed at the quiet and pleasing prospect. So charming now in the fall of the leaf, what would it be in the spring-time, with the meadows all breaking anew into green, and the trees all ready for their leaves again? Also these bright red Devonshire cows, all belonging to Polly, and even now streaming milkily—a firkin apiece was the least to expect of them, in the merry May month. A very deep feeling of real peace, and the pleasure of small things fell on me; for a man of so many years, and one arm, might almost plead to himself some right to shed his experience over the earth, when his blood had been curdling on so many seas.

The very same thought was in Polly's eyes when she ran down and opened the door for me. The whole of this property was her own; or would be, at least, when her old grandmother would allow herself to be buried. That old woman now was ninety-five, if the parsons had minded the register; and a woman more fully resolved to live on I never had the luck to meet with. And the worst of it was, that her consent to Polly's marriage was needful, under the ancient cow-keeper's will, with all of the meadows so described, that nobody could get out of them. Hereupon, somehow, I managed to see that a very bold stroke was needed. And I took it, and won the old lady over, by downright defiance. I told her that she was a great deal too young to have any right to an opinion; and when she should come to my time of life, she would find me ready to hearken her. She said that no doubt it was bred from the wars for sailors to talk so bravely; but that I ought to know better—with a fie, and a sigh, and a fie again. To none of this would I give ear, but began to rebuke all the young generations, holding to ridicule those very points upon which they especially plume themselves, until this most excellent woman began to count all her cows on her fingers.

"Her can't have them. No, her shan't have they," she cried, with a power which proved that she saw them dropping into my jaws almost; "her han't a got 'em yet; and why should her have 'em?"

Into this very fine feeling and sense of possession I entered so amiably, that amid much laughter and many blushes on the part of Polly (who pretended to treat the whole thing as a joke), the old lady put on

her silver goggles, and set down her name to a memorandum prepared on the spur of the moment by me. Whereupon I quite made my mind up to go bravely in for it, and recompense Polly for all her faith, and gratitude, and frugality, if she should prove herself capable of keeping counsel also.

To this intent I expressed myself as elegantly as could be, having led Polly out to the wooden bridge, that nobody else might hear me. For that fine old woman became so deaf, all of a sudden, that I had no faith in any more of her organs, and desired to be at safe distance from her, as well as to learn something more of the cows. Nor did I miss the chance; for all of them having been milked by Polly, came up to know what I had to say to her, and their smell was beautiful. So I gave them a bit of salt out of my pocket, such as I always carry, and offered them some tobacco; and they put out their broad lips for the one, and snorted and sneezed at the other. When these valuable cows were gone to have a little more grazing, I just made Polly aware of the chance that appeared to be open before us. In short, I laid clearly before her the whole of my recent grand discovery, proving distinctly that with nothing more than a little proper management, I possessed therein at least an equivalent for her snug meadow homestead, and all the milk-cows and the trout-stream. Only she must not forget one thing, namely, that the whole of this value would vanish, if a single word of this story were breathed any further off than our own two selves, until the time was ripe for it. Of course I had not been quite such a fool as to give Nanette the smallest inkling of any motive on my part beyond that pure curiosity, with which she could so well sympathize. Also it had been settled between Captain Bluett and myself, that a fortnight was to be allowed me for hunting up all the evidence, before he should cross the Channel; unless I took it on myself to fetch him.

Polly opened her blue eyes to such a size at all I told her, that I became quite uneasy lest she should open her mouth in proportion. For if my discovery once took wind before its entire completion, there would be at least fifty jealous fellows thrusting their oars into my own rowlocks, and robbing me of my own private enterprise. Also Miss Polly gave way to a feeling of anger and indignation, which certainly might be to some extent natural, but was, to say the least, in a far greater measure indiscreet, and even perilous.

"Oh the villain! oh the cruel villain!" she exclaimed, in a voice that quite alarmed me, considering how near the footpath was; "and a minister of the Gospel too! Oh the poor little babes, one adrift on the sea, and the other among them naked savages! What a mercy as they didn't eat him! And to blame the whole of it on a nice, harmless, kind-spoken, handsome gentleman, like our Captain! Oh, let me get hold of him!"

"That, my dear Polly, we never shall do, if you raise your voice in this way. Now come away from these trees with the ivy, and let us speak very quietly."

This dear creature did (as nearly as could be expected), what I told her; so that I really need not repent of my noble faith in the female race. This encouraged me; from its tendency to abolish prejudice, and to let the weaker vessels show that there is such a thing as a cork to them. Men are apt to judge too much by experience on this subject; when they ought to know that experience never does apply to women, any more than reason does.

Nevertheless my Polly saw the way in and out of a lot of things, which to me were difficult. Especially as to the manner of handling her cousin Mrs. Shapland, a very good woman in her way, but a ticklish one to deal with. And all the credit for all the truth we got out of Mrs. Shapland belongs not to me (any more than herself), but goes down in a lump to poor Polly.

To pass this lightly—as now behoves me—just let me tell what Susan Shapland said, when I worked it out of her. Any man can get the truth out of a woman, if he knows the way; I mean, of course, so far as she has been able to receive it. To expect more than this is unreasonable; and to get that much is wonderful. However, Polly and I, between us, did get a good deal of it.

Of course, we did not let this good woman even guess what we wanted with her; only we borrowed a farmer's cart from Bang, my old boy, who was now set up in a farm on his grandmother's ashes; and his horse was not to be found fault with, if a man did his duty in lashing him. This I was ready to understand, when pointed out by Polly; and he never hoisted his tail but what I raked him under his counter.

So after a long hill, commanding miles and miles of the course of the river, we fetched up in the courtyard of Farmer Shapland, and found his wife a brisk sharp woman, quite ready to tell her story. But what she did first, and for us, at this mo-

ment, was to rouse up the fire with a great dry fagot, crackling and sparkling merrily. For the mist of November was now beginning to crawl up the wavering valley, and the fading light from the west struck coldly on the winding river.

In such a case, and after a drive of many miles, and much scenery, any man loves to see pots and pans goaded briskly to bubbling and sputtering, or even to help in the business himself, so far as the cook will put up with it. And then if a foolish good woman allows him (as pride sometimes induces her) to lift up a pot-lid when trembling with flavour, or give a shake to the frying-pan in the ecstasy of crackling, or even to blow on the iron spoon, and then draw in his breath with a drop of it—what can he want with any scenery out of the window, or outside his waistcoat?

Such was my case, I declare to you, in that hospitable house with these good people of Burrington; nor could we fall to any other business, until this was done with; then after dark we drew round the fire, with a black-jack of grand old ale, and our pipes, to hear Mrs. Shapland's story.

CHAPTER LXIV.

SUSAN QUITE ACQUITS HERSELF.

It really does seem as wise a plan as any I am acquainted with, to let this good woman act according to the constitution of her sex,—that is to say, to say her say, and never be contradicted. We contradicted her once or twice, to reconcile her to herself; but all that came of it was to make her contradict perhaps herself, but certainly us, ten times as much. She did her best to explain her meaning; and we really ought to enter more into their disabilities. Therefore let her tell her story, as nearly in her own words, poor thing, as my sense of the English language can in any style agree with.

"I was nurse at Narnton Court, ever so many years ago—when my name was Susan Moggeridge,—Charley, you cannot deny it, you know; and all of us must be content to grow old, it is foolish to look at things otherwise. Twelve and six, that makes eighteen; now, Captain Wells, you know it do; and, Charley, can you say otherwise? Then it must have been eighteen years ago, when I was took on for under-nurse, because the Princess was expecting, the same as the butler told me. And it came to pass on a Sunday night, with two miles away from the doctor.

Orders had been given; but they foreigners always do belie them. Too soon always, or too late; and these two little dears was too soon, by reason of the wonderful child the eldest one was prepared for. A maid she was, and the other a boy; two real beauties both of them; as fair as could be, with little clear dots under their skin, in corner places, because of their mother the Princess. But nothing as any one would observe, except for a beauty to both of them. The boy was the biggest though the girl came first; and first was her nature in everything, except, of course in fatness, and by reason of always dancing. Not six months old was that child before she could dance on the kitchen-table, with only one hand to hold her up, and a pleasure it was to look at her. And laugh with her little funny face, and nod her head, she would, as if she saw to the bottom of everything. And when she were scarce turned the twelvemonth, she could run, like—oh, just like anything, and roll over and over on the grass with her 'Pomyollanian dog,' as she called him, and there wasn't a word in the language as ever come amiss to her, but for the r's or the y's in it. Words such as I could lay no tongue to, she would take and pronounce right off, and then laugh at herself and everybody. And the way she used to put her hands out, laying down the law to all of us—we didn't want a showman in the house so long as we had Miss Bertha, or 'Bardie,' as she called herself, though christened after her mother. Everybody, the poor little mite, she expected everybody to know her name and all about her; and nothing put her in such a passion as to pretend not to know who she was. 'Tae Bardie,' she used to cry out, with her little hands spread, and her bright eyes flashing; 'Tae Bardie, I tell 'a; and ev'rybody knows it.' Oh yes, and she never could say 'th'—but 'niss' and 'nat,' for this and that. And how angry she used to be, to be sure if anybody mocked her, as we used to do for the fun of it. But even there, she was up to us, for she began to talk French for revenge upon us, having taken the trick from her mother.

"Likewise the boy was a different child altogether, in many ways. He scarcely could learn to speak at all, because he was a very fine child indeed, and quiet, and fat, and easy. He would lie by for hours on a velvet cushion, and watch his little sister having her perpetual round of play. Dolls, and horses, and Noah's arks, and all the things that were alive to her, and she

talking to them whiles the hour, — he took no more notice than just to stroke them, and say, 'Boo, boo!' or 'Poor, poor!' which was nearly all that he could say. Not that he was to blame, of course, nor would any one having sense think of it, especially after he took the pink fever, and it struck to his head, and they cut his hair off. Beautiful curls as was ever seen, and some of them in my drawer up-stairs now, with the colour of gold streaking over them. Philip his name was, of course, from Sir Philip, and being the heir to the title; but his clever sister she always called him 'l'ttle brother,' as if he was just born almost, when he weighed pretty nearly two of her.

"Sir Philip, the good old gentleman, was away in foreign parts, they said, or commanding some of the colonies, up to the time when these two twins were close upon two years old or so. I remember quite well when he came home with his luggage marked 'General Bampfylde;' and we said it was disrespectful of the Government to call him so, when his true name was 'Sir Philip.' He had never seen his grandchildren till now, and what a fuss he made with them! But they had scarcely time to know him, before they were sadly murdered; or worse, perhaps, for all that any one knows to the contrary. Because Sir Philip's younger son, Captain Drake Bampfylde, came from the seas and America, just at this time. No one expected him, of course, from among such distant places; and he had not been home for three years at least, and how noble he did look, until we saw how his shirts were cobbled! And every one all about the place said that his little finger was worth the whole of the Squire's body. Because the Squire, his elder brother, and the heir of Sir Philip, was of a nature, not to say — but I cannot make it clear to you. No one could say a word against him; only he were not what you may call it, — not as we Devonshire people are, — not with a smile and kind look of the eye, the same as Captain Drake was.

"This poor Captain Drake — poor or bad, I scarce know which to put it, after all I have heard of him — anyhow his mind was set upon a little chit of a thing, not more than fifteen at this time. Her name was Isabel Carey, and her father had been a nobleman and when he departed this life, he ordered her off to Narnton Court. So she did at an early age; and being so beautiful, as some thought, she was desperate with the Captain. They used to go walking all up in the woods, or

down on the river in a boat, until it was too bad of them. The Captain, I daresay, meant no harm, and perhaps he did none; but still there are sure to be talkative people who want to give their opinions. If Charley had carried on so with me, whatever should I have thought of myself?

"Well, there was everybody saying very fine things to everybody, gay doings like-wise, and great feasts, and singing, and dancing, and all the rest. And the Captain hired a pleasure-boat, by name the 'Wild Duck of Appledore;' and I never shall forget the day when he took a whole pack of us for a sail out over Barnstaple bar and back. I was forced to go, because he needs must take the children; and several even old people were sick, but no one a quarter so bad as me. And it came into my mind in that state, that he was longing, as well as welcome, to cast us all into the raging sea. However, the Lord preserved us. This little ship had one mast, as they call it, and he kept her generally in a little bend just above the salmon-weir, so as to see the men draw the pool, and himself to shoot the wild-fowl, from a covered place there is; and by reason of being so long at sea, he could not sleep comfortable at the Court, but must needs make his bed in this pleasuring-ship, and to it he used to go to and fro in a little white boat as belonged to it.

"All this time the weather was so hot we could scarcely bear our clothes on, and were ready to envy them scandalous savages belonging to the famous Parson Chowne, who went about with no clothes on. There was one of these known to be down on the burrows a-bathing of his wife and family, if a decent woman may name them so. Well, the whole of these gay goings on, to celebrate the return of Sir Philip, and of Captain Drake, and all that they owed to the Lord for His goodness, was to finish up with a great dinner to all the tenants on the property; and then on the children's birthday, a feasting of all the gentry around; and a dance with all sorts of outlandish dresses and masks on, in the evening. For the fashion of this was come down from London, and there had been a party of this sort over to Lord Bassett's; and the neighbourhood was wild with it. And after this everything was to be quiet, because my Lady the Princess Bertha was again beginning to expect almost.

"And now, Captain Wells, you would hardly believe what a blow there was sent, by the will of the Lord, upon all of

this riot and revelry. There was many of us having pious disposals, as well as religious bringings up, whose stomachs really was turned by the worldliness as was around us. Young ladies of the very best families, instead of turning their minds to the Lord, turning of themselves about, with young men laying hold of them, as if there was nothing more to be said than 'Kiss me quick!' and, 'I'll do it again!' But there was a judgment coming. They might lay the blame on me, if they like. There is folk as knows better.

"That very night it was so hot, with the sun coming up from the river, that even the great hall the dance was to be in, was only fit to lie down in. So that Captain Drake, in his man-of-war voice, shouted (and I think I can hear him now), 'Ladies and gentlemen, I propose that we have our dance out on the terrace.' This was the open made-up flat between the house and the river, and the Captain's offer was caught up at, directly the gentle-folk seen the moon.

"Here they were going on ever so long; and the more of twirling round they had, and of making heel and toe, and crossing arms and even frontesses, the more they seemed to like it; also the music up and down almost as bad as they was; so that what with the harlequin dresses, and masquerading, and mummeries, scarcely any one could have the head to be sure of any one else almost. I could not help looking at them, although my place was to heed the children only, and keep them out of mischief, and take them to bed at the proper time. But Captain Drake, who was here, there, and elsewhere, making himself agreeable, up he comes to me with a bottle, and he says, 'Mary, have some,' 'My name is not Mary, but Susan, sir, and much at your service,' I answered; so he poured me a big glassful, and said that it was Sam—something. I was not so rude as to give him denial, but made him a curtsy, and drank it, for it was not so strong as my father's cider; no, nor so good to my liking. And for any to say that it got into my head, shows a very spiteful woman. The Captain went on to the other maids, as were looking on for the life of them, all being out-of-doors you must mind, and longing to have their turn at it. But I held myself above them always, and went back to my children.

"These were in a little bower made up for the occasion, with boughs of trees, and twisted wood, and moss from the forest to lie upon. Master Philip was tired and

heavy, and working his eyes with the backs of his hands, and yawning, and falling away almost. But that little Bertha was as wide-awake as a lark on her nest in the morning. Everywhere she was looking about for somebody to encourage her to have 'more play,' as she always called for; and 'more play' continually. That child was so full of life, it was 'more play' all day long with her! And even now, in the fiery heat and thorough down thirst of the weather, nothing was further from her mind than to go to bed without a gambol for it. She had nothing on but her little shift, or under frock I should call it, made by myself, when the hot weather came, from a new jennyset of the Princess, and cut out by my lady to fit her for the sake of the coolness. Her grand white upper frock, trimmed with lace, had been taken off by her papa, I believe, when the visitors would have her dance on the table, and make speeches to them; the poor little soul was so quick and so hot.

"Well, I do declare to you, Captain Wells, and Charley, Polly likewise, which will believe me, though the men may not, it was not more than a minute or so much, perhaps I should say not half a minute, as I happened to turn round to pass a compliment with a young man as seemed struck with me the Sunday before in church-time; a sailor he were, and had come with the Captain, and was his mate of the pleasure-boat. A right down handsome young man he was — no call for you to be jealous, Charley. Beneath the salt waves he do lie. Well, I turned back my head in about five seconds, and both of the babes was gone out of my sight! At first I were not frightened much. I took it for one of Miss Bertha's tricks, to make off with her little brother. So strong she was on her legs, though light, that many a time she would lift him up by his middle and carry him half round the room, and then both of them break out laughing. 'I'll whip you, you see if I don't I cried, as I ran round the corner to seek for them; though whip them I never did, poor dears, any more than their own mother did. I ran all about, for five minutes at least, around and among the branches stuck in to make the bower, and every moment I made up my mind for Miss Bardie to pop out on me. But pop out she never did, nor will, until the day of judgment.

"When I began to see something more than an innocent baby trick in it, and to think (I daresay) of these two babies' value, with all the land they were born to, the

first thing I did was to call out 'Jack!' such being all sailors' names, of course. But Jack was gone out of all hearing; and most folk said it was Jack that took them! To the contrary I could swear; but who would listen to me when the lie went out that I was entirely tipsy?

"Of the rest I cannot speak clearly, because my heart flew right up into my brain, directly moment the people came round shouting at me for the children. And of these the very worst was Parson Chowne. If it had been his own only children — such as he says he is too good to have — he scarcely could have been more rampagious, not to use worse words of him. The first thing that every one ran to, of course, was the parapetch and the river, and a great cry was made for Captain Drake Bampfyde, from his knowledge of the waterways. But, though all the evening foremost in conducting everything, now there was no sign to be had of him, or of who had seen him last. And it must have been an hour ere ever he come, and then of course it was too late.

"I was so beside myself all that night that I cannot tell how the time went by. I remember looking over the the parapetch at a place where the water is always deep, and seeing the fishermen from the salmon-weir dragging their nets for the poor mites of bodies. And my blood seemed to curdle inside me almost, every time they came out with a stone or a log. Nothing was found from that night to this day, and nothing will ever be found of it. I was discharged, and a great many others; not the first time in this world, I believe, when the bottom of the whole was witchcraft. Here, Charley, put something hot in my glass; the evenings are getting so dark; and I never can see the moon and the water, like that, and the trees, without remembering. Now ask me no more, if you please, good people."

When Mrs. Shapland had finished this tale, and was taking some well-earned refreshment, Polly and I looked at one another, as much as to say, "That settles it." Nor did we press her with any more questions until her mind had recovered its tone by frying some slices of ham cut thin, and half-a-dozen new-laid eggs for us. Then, I approached her with no small praise, which she deserved, and appeared (so far as I could judge) to desire, perhaps; and with a little skill on my part, she was soon warmed up again, having tasted egg-flip, to be sure of it.

"Yes, Captain Wells, you can see through the whole of it. Sailors can un-

derstand a river, when nobody else knows anything. The Captain came forward as soon as he could, and he says, 'You fools, what are you about? An hour ago the tide was running five knots an hour where you be dragging! If the poor children fell over, they must be down river-bar by this time.' And off he set out on a galloping horse, to scurry the sand-hills somehow. And scurry was now the whole of it. Sir Philip came forth, and that poor Squire Philip; and a thousand pounds was as freely talked of as if it was halfpence. And every one was to be put in prison; especially me, if you please, as blameless as the unborn babe was! And that very night the Princess were taken, and died the next day, upsetting everything, ever so much worse than ever. For poor Squire Philip fell into a trance, so to say, out of sheer vexation. He cried out that the hand of the Lord was upon him, and too heavy for him to bear — particular from his own brother. And after that not an inch would he budge to make inquiry or anything, but shut himself up in his dead wife's rooms, and there he have moped from that day to this, in a living grave, as you may call it."

In reply to my question what reasons the Squire, or any one else, might have for charging the Captain with so vile a deed, this excellent woman set them forth pretty much to the following purport. First, it was the Captain himself who proposed the dancing on the terrace. Second, it was his own man who drew her attention away from the children, after a goblet of wine had been administered by the master. Third, it was his own boat which was missing, and never heard of afterwards. Fourth, the Captain himself disappeared from the party at the very time that the children were stolen, and refused to say whither, or why, he was gone. That active and shrewd man Parson Chowne no sooner heard of the loss than he raised a cry for the Captain all over the terrace, to come and command the fishermen; and though as a friend of the family Chowne would never express an opinion, he could not undo that sad shake of the head which he gave when no Captain could be found. Fifth, a man with a Captain's hat was seen burying two small bodies that night, in the depth of Braunton Wilderness; though nothing was heard of it till the next week, through the savageness of the witness; and by that time the fierce storm on the Sunday had changed the whole face of the burrows, so that to find the spot was impossible. Sixth, it was now recalled to

mind that Drake Bampfylde had killed a poor schoolfellow in his young days, for which the Lord had most righteously sent a shark in pursuit of him. It was likely enough that he would go on killing children upon occasion. Seventh reason, and perhaps worth all the rest — only think what a motive he had for it. No one else could gain sixpence by it; Drake Bampfylde would gain everything — the succession to the title and estates, and the immediate right to aspire to the hand of the beautiful heiress, Miss Carey, who was known to favour him.

Thus the common people reasoned; but our Susan attached no weight to any except the last argument. As for one, she knew quite well that the young seaman sauntered there quite by chance, and quite by chance she spoke to him: and as for wine, she could take a quart of her father's cider, and feel it less than she could describe to any one; and as for a rummer of that stuff she had, it was quite below contempt to her. And concerning the Captain just being away, and declining to say where he was, like a gentleman; none but ignorant folk could pretend not to know what that meant. Of course he was gone, between the dances, for a little cool walk in the firwoods, together with his Isabel; and to expose her name to the public, with their nasty way of regarding things, was utterly out of the question to a real British officer! And to finish it, Mrs. Shapland said that she was almost what you might call a young woman even now; at any rate with ten times the sense any of the young ones were up to. And ten years of her life she would give, if Charley would allow of her, to know what became of them two little dears, and to punish the villain that wronged them.

Hereupon my warmth of heart got the better of my prudence. My wise and pure intention was to get out of this good woman all I could; but impart to her nothing more than was needful, just to keep her talking. Experience shows us that this need be very little indeed, if anything, in a female dialogue. But now I was brought to such a pitch of tenderness by this time, with my heart in a rapid pulse of descriptions, and the egg-dip going round sturdily, also Polly looking at me in a most beseeching way, that I could not keep my own counsel even, but was compelled to increase their comfort by declaring everything.

CHAPTER LXV.

SO DOES POOR OLD DAVY.

HEREUPON, you may well suppose that the grass must no longer grow under my feet. With one man, and positively two women, in this very same county, having possession of my secret, how long could I hope to work this latter to any good purpose? Luckily Burrington lay at a very great distance from Nympton on the Moors, and with no road from one to the other; so that if Mr. and Mrs. Shapland should fail of keeping their promised tightness, at least two Barnstaple market-days must pass before Nympton heard anything. And but for this consideration, even their style of treatment would not have made me so confiding.

On the following morn, while looking forth at pigs, and calves, and cocks, and ducks, I perceived that the crash must come speedily, and resolved to be downright smart with it. So after making a brisk little breakfast, upon the two wings and two legs of a goose, grilled with a trifle of stuffing, there was but one question I asked before leaving many warm tears behind me.

"Good Mistress Shapland, would you know that jemmyset of the child, if you saw it?"

"Captain Wells, I am not quite a natural. My own stitching done with a club-head, all of it, and of a three-lined thread as my uncles, and nobody else had, to Barnstaple. Likewise the mark of the Princess done, a mannygram, as they call it."

The weather was dull, and the time of year as stormy as any I know of: nevertheless it was quite fine now, and taking upon myself to risk five guineas out of my savings, Ilfracombe was the place I sought, and found it with some difficulty. Thus might Barnstaple bar be avoided, and all the tumbling of inshore waters; and thus with no more than a pilot-yawl did I cross that dangerous channel, at the most dangerous time of the year almost. Nothing less than my Royal clothes and manifest high rank in the Navy could have induced this fine old pilot to make sail for the opposite coast in the month of November, when violent gales are so common with us. But I showed him two alternatives, three golden guineas on the one hand, impressment on the other; for a press-gang was in the neighbourhood now, and I told him that I was its captain, and that we laughed at all certificates. And not being sure that this man and his son might

not combine to throw me overboard, steal my money, and run back to port, I took care to let them perceive my entry of their names and my own as well in the register of the coast-guard. However they proved very honest fellows, and we anchored under Porthcawl point soon after dark that evening.

Having proved to the pilot that he was quite safe here, unless it should come on to blow from the south-east, of which there was no symptom, and leaving him under the care of Sandy, who at my expense stood treat to him, I made off for Candleston, not even stopping for a chat with Roger Berkrolles. The Colonel, of course, as well as his sister Lady Bluett, and Rodney, were delighted with what I had to tell them, while the maid herself listened with her face concealed to the tale of her own misfortune. Once or twice she whispered to herself, "Oh, my poor poor father!" and when I had ended she rose from the sofa where Lady Bluett's arm was around her, and went to the Colonel and said, "How soon will you take me to my father?"

"My darling Bertha," said the Colonel, embracing her, as if she had been his daughter, "we will start to-morrow if Llewellyn thinks the weather quite settled, and the boat quite safe. He knows so much about boats you see. It would take us a week to go round by land. But we won't start at all, if you cry, my dear!"

I did not altogether like the tone of the Colonel's allusion to me; still less was I pleased when he interrupted Lady Bluett's congratulations, thanks, and fervent praises of my skill, perseverance, and trustiness, in discovering all this villany.

"Humph!" said the Colonel; "I am not quite sure that this villany would have succeeded so long, unless a certain small boat had proved so adapted for fishing purposes."

"Why, Henry!" cried his sister; "how very unlike you! What an unworthy insinuation! After all Mr. Llewellyn has done; it is positively ungrateful. And he spoke of that boat in this very room, as I can perfectly well remember, not — oh not — I am sure any more than a very few years ago, my dear."

"Exactly," said the Colonel; "too few years ago. If he had spoken of that at the time, as distinctly as he did afterwards, when the heat of inquiry was over, and when Sir Philip himself had abandoned it, I do not see how all this confusion, between the loss of a foreign ship and the casting away of a British boat, could have

arisen, or at any rate could have failed to be cleared away. Llewellyn, you know that I do not judge hastily. Sir, I condemn your conduct."

"Oh, Colonel, how dreadful of you! Mr. Llewellyn, go and look at the weather, while I prove to the Colonel his great mistake. You did speak of the boat at the very inquest, in the most noble and positive manner; and nobody would believe you, as you your very self told me. What more could any man do? We are none of us safe, if we do our very best, and have it turned against us."

My conscience all this time was beating, so that I could hear it. This is a gift very good men have, and I have made a point of never failing to cultivate it. In this trying moment, with even a man so kind and blameless suddenly possessed no doubt by an evil spirit against me, staunch as rock my conscience stood, and to my support it rose, creditably for both of us.

"Colonel Lougher," my answer was, "you will regret this attack on the honour of a British officer. One, moreover, whose great-grandfather harped in your Honour's family. Captain Bluett understands the build of a boat as well as I do. He shall look at that to-morrow morning, and if he declares her to be English-built, you may set me down, with all my stripes and medals, for a rogue, sir. But if he confirms my surety of her being a foreigner, nothing but difference of rank will excuse you, Colonel Lougher, from being responsible to me."

My spirit was up as you may see: and the honour of the British Navy forced me to speak strongly: although my affection for the man was such that sooner than offend him, I would have my other arm shot away.

"Llewellyn," said the Colonel, with his fine old smile spreading very pleasantly upon his noble countenance; "you are of the peppery order which your old Welsh blood produces. Think no more of my words for the present. And if my nephew agrees with you in pronouncing the boat a foreigner, I will give you full satisfaction by asking your pardon, Llewellyn. It was enough to mislead any man."

Not to dwell upon this mistake committed by so good a man, but which got abroad somehow — though my old friend Crumpy, I am sure, could never have been listening at the door — be it enough in this hurry to say, that on the next morning I was able to certify the weather. A smartish breeze from the north-north-west, with the sea rather dancing than running, took

poor Bardie to her native coast, from which the hot tide had borne her. Before we set sail, I had been to Sker in Colonel Lougher's two-wheeled gig, and obtained from good Moxy the child's jemmyset from the old oak chest it was stored in.

And now I did a thing which must for ever acquit me of all blame so wrongfully cast upon me. That is to say, I fetched out the old boat, which Sandy Macraw had got covered up; and releasing him in the most generous manner from years and years of back rent, what did I do but hitch her on to the stern of the pilot-yawl, for to tow? Not only this, but I managed that Rodney should sail on board as her skipper, and for his crew should have somebody who had crossed the channel before in that same boat, sixteen years ago, I declare! And they did carry on a bit, now and then, when our sprit-sail hid them from our view. For the day was bright, and the sea was smooth.

The Colonel and I were on board of the yawl, enjoying perfect harmony. For Captain Rodney of course had confirmed my opinion as to the build of the boat, and his uncle desired to beg my pardon, which the largeness of my nature quite refused to hear of. If a man admits that he has wronged me, satisfied I am at once, and do not even point out always that I never could have done the like to him.

Colonel Lougher had often been at sea, in the time of his active service, and he seemed to enjoy this trip across channel, and knew all the names of the sails and spars. But falling in as we did with no less than three or four small craft on our voyage, he asked me how Delushy's boat could possibly have been adrift for a whole night and day on the channel, without any ship even sighting her. I told him that this was as simple as could be, during that state of the weather. A burning haze, or steam from the land, lay all that time on the water; and the lower part thereof was white, while the upper spread was yellow. Also the sea itself was white from the long-continued calmness, so that a white boat scarcely would show at half a mile of distance. And even if it did, what sailors were likely to keep a smart look-out in such roasting weather? Men talk of the heat ashore sometimes; but I know that for downright smiting, blinding, and overwhelming sun-power, there is nothing ashore to compare with a ship.

Also I told the Colonel, now that his faith in me was re-established, gliding

over the water thus, I was enabled to make plain to him things which if he had been ashore might have lain perhaps a little beyond his understanding. I showed him the set of the tides by tossing corks from his bottles overboard, and begging him to take a glass of my perspective to watch them. And he took such interest in this, and evinced so much sagacity, that in order to carry on my reasoning with any perspicacity, cork after cork I was forced to draw to establish my veracity.

Because he would argue it out that a boat, unmanned and even unmasted, never could have crossed the channel as Bardie's boat must needs have done. I answered that I might have thought so also, and had done so for years and years, till there came the fact to the contrary; of which I was pretty well satisfied now; and when the boat was produced and sworn to, who would not be satisfied? Also I begged to remind him how strongly the tide ran in our channel, and that even in common weather the ebb of the spring out of Barnstaple river might safely be put at four knots an hour, till Hartland point was doubled. Here, about two in the morning, the flood would catch the little wanderer, and run her up channel some ten or twelve miles, with the night-wind on the starboard-beam driving her also northward. When this was exhausted, the ebb would take her into Swansea Bay almost, being so light a boat as she was, with a southern breeze prevailing. And then the next flood might well bring her to Sker, — exactly the thing that had come to pass. Moreover I thought, as I told the Colonel (although of course with diffidence), from long acquaintance with tropical waters and the power of the sun upon them, I thought it by no means unlikely that the intense heat of the weather, then for more than six weeks prevailing, might have had some strong effect on the set and the speed of the currents.

However, no more of arguments. What good can they do, when the thing is there, and no reasoning can alter it? Even Parson Chowne might argue, and no doubt would with himself (although too proud with other people), that all he did was right, and himself as good a man as need be.

We ran across channel in some six hours, having a nice breeze abaft the beam, and about the middle of the afternoon we landed at Ilfracombe cleverly. This is a little place lying in a hole, and with great rocks all around it, fair enough

to look at, but more easy to fall down than to get up them. And even the Barnstaple road is so steep that the first hill takes nearly two hours of climbing. Therefore, in spite of all eager spirits, we found ourselves forced to stay there that night, for no one would house us onwards, so late at this November season.

Perhaps, however, it was worth while to lose a few hours for the sake of seeing Delushy's joy in her native land. This, like a newly-opened spring, arose, and could not contain itself. As soon as her foot touched the shore, I began to look forward to a bout of it. For I understand young women now, very well, though the middle-aged are beyond me. These latter I hope to be up to, if ever I live to the age of fourscore years, as my constitution promises. And if the Lord should be pleased to promote me to the ripe and honest century (as was done to my great-grandfather), then I shall understand old women also, though perhaps without teeth to express it.

However this was a pretty thing, and it touched me very softly. None but those who have roamed as I have understand the heart-ache. For my native land I had it, ever and continually, and in the roar of battle I was borne up by discharging it. And so I could enter into our poor Bardie, going about with the tears in her eyes. For she would not allow me to rest at the inn, as I was fain to do in the society of some ancient fishermen, and to leave the gentlefolk to their own manner of getting through the evening. "Come out," she cried, "old Davy; you are the only one that knows the way about this lovely place." Of course I had no choice but to obey Sir Philip's own grand-daughter, although I could not help grumbling; and thus we began to explore a lane as crooked as a corkscrew, and with ferns like palm-trees feathering. In among them little trickling rills of water tinkled, or were hushed sometimes by moss, and it looked as if no frost could enter through the leafy screen above.

"What a country to be born in! What a country to belong to!" exclaimed the maid continually, sipping from each crystal

runnel, and stroking the ferns with reverence. "Uncle Henry, don't you think now that it is enough to make one happy to belong to such a land?"

"Well, my dear," said her Uncle Henry, as she had been ordered to call the Colonel, "I think it would still more conduce to happiness for some of the land to belong to you. Ah, Llewellyn, I see, is of my opinion."

So I was, and still more so next day, when, having surmounted that terrible hill, we travelled down rich dairy valleys on our road to Barnstaple. Here we halted for refreshment, and to let Delushy rest and beautify herself, although we could see no need of that. And now she began to get so frightened that I was quite vexed with her: her first duty was to do me credit; and how could she manage it, if her eyes were red? The Colonel also began to provoke me, for when I wanted to give the maid a stiff glass of grog to steady her, he had no more sense than to countermand it, and order a glass of cold water!

As soon as we came to Narnton Court, we found a very smart coach in the yard, that quite put to shame our hired chaise, although the good Colonel had taken four horses, so as to land us in moderate style. Of course it was proper that I, who alone could claim Sir Philip's acquaintance, as well as the merit of the whole affair, should have the pleasure of introducing his new grandchild to him; so that I begged all the rest to withdraw, and the only names that we sent in, were Captain Llewellyn and "Miss Delushy." Therefore we were wrong, no doubt, in feeling first a little grievance, then a large-minded impatience, and finally a strong desire — ay, and not the desire alone — to swear, before we got out of it. I speak of myself and Captain Bluett, two good honest sailors, accustomed to declare their meaning since the war enabled them. But Colonel Lougher (who might be said, from his want of active service, to belong to a past generation), as well as Delushy, who was scarcely come into any generation yet, — these two really set an example, good, though hard, to follow.

In honour of the two-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Peter the Great, a detailed catalogue has just been published, with notes in

French, of all the foreign books about Russia contained in the Imperial Public Library at St. Petersburg.

From Fraser's Magazine.

CLEVER FISHES.

By FRANCIS FRANCIS.

WHETHER we owe many of the matters we are about to glance at to fishes or no, it is certain that the fishes possessed them long before we did, and though man may be said to have invented them, yet in his savage state he must have taken more or less of hints from nature, and have adopted the methods which nature pointed out to him as the most effective in hunting or war (which were his principal occupations) whenever they could be adapted to his needs and appliances. However this may be, it is certainly singular that we should find so many existing similarities of a peculiar kind between the habits and attributes of men and fishes. For example, there is scarcely a sport we practise or a weapon of offence that we use which has not a parallel among fishes. As to weapons—daggers, spears, swords, are all possessed by fish in a very high state of natural perfection, and even guns have a representative institution among fishes. A Shooting Fish would no doubt be looked upon almost as a *lusus nature* by the average Englishman, who rarely includes ichthyology amongst his studies—a fact which is very much to be lamented, for we have large national interests bound up in that science; in fact, we owe a great deal more to fishes than any other nation, not even excluding the Dutch, some of whose cities were formerly figuratively described as built on fish-bones, and a professorial chair of Ichthyology at the universities would be by no means an unwise institution. It is not many years since that a review which was published in an influential paper, dealing amongst other things, with this special point, contemptuously dismissed the fact of there being such a thing as a shooting fish as a traveller's tale. The ignorance amongst the general public on everything relating to fish is at times perfectly surprising. I have seen small worthless bass passed off as grey mullet; I have seen even nasty gravid pond roach hawked about as grey mullet; I have seen large bass actually sold for salmon at one of our fashionable watering places. After this, if the Londoner constantly buys coarse, dry, tasteless bull-trout as fine Tay salmon, it is not to be wondered at. The Eton boy hastening home for the holidays provides himself with a tin tube and a pocketful of peas. We beg the present Etonian's pardon; we should have said he

used to do so formerly, when there were boys at Eton, and, backed by some skill as a marksman, therewith constituted himself an intolerable nuisance to every village and vehicle he passed on his road home. The Macoushee Indian makes a better use of his blow-tube; he puffs small arrows and hardened balls of clay through it with unerring aim, doing great execution amongst birds and other small game. Now the *Chætodon* (*Chætodon rostratus*), which is more or less a native of the eastern seas from Ceylon to Japan, rather perhaps resembles the Macoushee Indian than the Eton boy, though his gun, shooting tube, or blow-pipe, or whatever it may be termed, is a natural one. His nose is really a kind of "beak," through which he has the power of propelling a small drop of water with some force and considerable accuracy of aim. Near the edge of the water is perhaps a spray of weed, a twig, or a tuft of grass; on it sits a fly, making its toilet in the watery mirror below. *Rostratus* advances cautiously under the fly; then he stealthily projects his tube from the water, takes a deadly aim, as though he were contesting for some piscatory Elcho shield, and pop goes the watery bullet.

Poor insect, what a little day of sunny bliss is thine!

Knocked over by the treacherous missile, drenched, stunned, half-drowned, she drops from her perch into the waters below, to be sucked in by the *Chætodon*. But if we have fishes who can shoot their game, we have also fishes who can fish for it; ay, and fish for it with rod and line, and bait as deftly as ever angler coaxed gudgeons from the ooze of the New River or salmon from the flashing torrent of the Spey. Witness this clumsy-looking monster the Fishing Frog (*Lophius piscatorius*). Frightful and hideous is he according to our vulgar notions of loveliness, which the *Lophius* possibly might disagree with. The beast is sometimes five or six feet in length, with an enormous head in proportion to the rest of its body, and with huge sacks like bag-nets attached to its gill-covers, in which it stows its victims; and what a cavernous mouth! Surely a fish so repulsive and with a capacity so vast and apparently omnivorous, would frighten from its neighbourhood all other fish, and would, if its powers of locomotion were in accordance with its size, be the terror of the seas to fish smaller than itself; but Providence knoweth how to temper its gifts, and the *Lophius* is but an indifferent

swimmer, and is too clumsy to support a predatory existence by the fleetness of its motions. How, then, is this huge capacity satisfied? Mark those two elongated tentacles which spring from the creature's nose, and how they taper away like veritable fishing rods. To the end of them is attached by a line or a slender filament a small glittering morsel of membrane. This is the bait. The hooks are set in the mouth of the fisherman down below. But how is the animal to induce the fish to venture within reach of those formidable hooks? Now mark this perfect feat of angling. How does the Thames fishermen attract the gudgeons? They are shy; he must not let them see him, yet he must draw them to him, and he does it by stirring up the mud upon the bottom. "In that cloud of mud is food," say the gudgeons. Then the angler plies his rod and bait. Just so the *Lophius* proceeds, and he too stirs up the mud with his fins and tail. This serves not only to hide him, but to attract the fish. Then he plies his rod, and the glittering bait waves to and fro like a living insect glancing through the turbid water. The gudgeons, or rather gobies, rush towards it. "Beware! beware!" But when did gudgeon attend to warning yet? Suddenly up rises the cavernous *Nemesis* from the cloud below, and "snap:" the gobies are entombed in the bag-net, thence to be transferred to the *Lophius's* stomach, when there are enough of them collected to form a satisfactory mouthful.

But we have still other sportsmen fish; we have fish who hunt their prey singly, or in pairs, or even in packs, like hounds. The reader, possibly, has never witnessed a skùll in Scandinavia. It is a species of hunt in which a number of sportsmen take in a wide space of ground, where game exists, drawing a cordon around it, and narrowing their circle little by little, and driving the game together into a flock, when they shoot them down. There was some years ago a capital description of porpoises, making a skùll upon sand-eels, written by the late Mr. James Lowe, sometime editor of the *Critic* and "Chronicle" of the *Field*, who saw the sight while fishing near the Channel Islands with Peter le Nowry, the pilot. Having searched for this passage several times, without being able to find it, I am reluctantly compelled to quote from memory. They were fishing off Guernsey, when Mr. Lowe called Peter's attention to several porpoises, which seemed to be engaged in a water frolic, swimming after

one another in a circle. "That is no frolic, but very sober earnest for the sand-eels," said Peter. "Now," he continued, "I will show you a sight which I have only chanced to see two or three times in my life, and you therefore are very lucky to have the opportunity of seeing it at all. There is a great shoal of sand-eels yonder, and the porpoises are driving them into a mass; for, you see, the sand-eel is only a very small morsel for a porpoise, and to pick them up one by one would not suit Mr. Porpoise, who would get hungry again by the time he had done feeding on them singly; so they drive them into a thick crowd, in order that when they make a dash at them they may get a dozen or two at a mouthful. But, as we want some for bait, we will join in the hunt." And they edged down to the spot till they were within the circle. The porpoises, following one another pretty closely, were swimming round, now rising to the surface, now diving below, and gradually contracting the circle. The terrified sand-eels were driven closer and closer, and in their fear came to the surface all about the boat; and just as two or three porpoises made a dash into the crowd, snapping right and left, the fishermen plunged their nets into the water, and brought them up quite full of these little fish. Of course the shoal soon broke up and dispersed, but the skill with which the skùll was conducted and the beauty of the sight were much dilated on by Mr. Lowe, and it must have been a very interesting one.

There are many fish which hunt their prey singly, as the pike and trout, and the way in which a large pike or trout will course and run down a smaller fish resembles nothing so much as a greyhound coursing a hare. Now the unhappy little fish turns from side to side in its efforts to escape, while its pursuer bends and turns to every motion, following close upon his track, and cutting him off exactly as a greyhound does a hare. Now he rushes amongst a shoal of his fellows, hoping to be lost sight of in the crowd and confusion; but the grim foe behind is not to be baffled or deceived, and singling him out and scattering the small fry, which fly in all directions, ruffling the surface of the water like a sudden squall of wind in their fright, follows up his victim with unerring instinct. In an agony of terror the poor little quarry springs again and again frantically from the water, only to fall at last exhausted into the gaping jaws of his ravenous foe, who, gripping his body cross-

wise in his mouth, sails steadily away to his lair, there to devour his prey at leisure. Other fish hunt their food like dogs or wolves in packs, as does the bonito chase the flying fish, and one perhaps of the fiercest, most savage, and resolute of these is the Pirai, of South America. So fierce and savage are these little pirates, when their size and apparent capability is taken into consideration, that their feats of destructiveness are little short of the marvellous. Stand forth, then, "pirai" of the Carib, "black saw-bellied salmon" (*Serra salmo niger*) of Schomburgk; so called, doubtless, from the possession of the peculiar adipose fin, common only to the salmon tribe, though in no other respect does it resemble a salmon, there being positive structural differences between the species. Let us take the portrait of this fish. Doubtless the reader figures to himself a fish of "a lean and hungry look," a very Cassius of a fish, with the lantern jaws of a pike. But, in fact, the pirai is somewhat aldermanic and like a bream in figure, with a fighting-looking kind of nose, and a wondrously expressive eye—cold, cruel, and insatiable, and like to that of an old Jew bill discounter when scrutinizing doubtful paper. There is 70 or 80 per cent. in that eye at the very least, and ruin to widows and orphans unnumbered if they come in its way. If it were a human eye, the owner would be bound sooner or later to figure at execution dock. The jaw is square, powerful, and locked into a very large head for the size of the fish; and that is a fat, plump head too, but radiated over with strong bone and gristle. The teeth—ah! they would condemn him anywhere, for here is a fish sixteen inches long, with the teeth almost of a shark. Schomburgk speaks thus of its destructive power:

This voracious fish is found plentifully in all the rivers in Guiana, and is dreaded by every other inhabitant or visitant of the river. Their jaws are so strong that they are able to bite off a man's finger or toe. They attack fish of ten-times their own weight, and devour all but the head. They begin with the tail, and the fish, being left without the chief organ of motion, is devoured with ease, several going to participate of the meal. Indeed there is scarcely any animal which it will not attack, man not excepted. Large alligators which have been wounded on the tail afford a fair chance of satisfying their hunger, and even the toes of this formidable animal are not free from their attacks. The feet of ducks and geese, where they are kept, are almost invariably cut off, and young ones devoured altogether. In these places it is not safe to bathe, or even to wash clothes, many

cases having occurred of fingers and toes being cut off by them.

Schomburgk then relates astonishing instances of their voracity, in which the toes of the river Cavia are eaten off; a large sun-fish devoured alive; ducks and geese deprived of their feet and walking on the stumps. Of course the lines which are used to capture them have to be armed with metal to prevent their being cut through. Their voracity is marvellous, and any bait will attract them the instant it is thrown into the water. Precaution is necessary, however, when the fish is lifted out of the water, or it will inflict serious wounds in its struggles. The fisherman therefore has a small bludgeon ready, with which he breaks their skulls as soon as they are caught.

Thus there are fish which shoot their prey, which fish for it, which course it and hunt it, in various ways. There are others which employ other fishes to hunt it up for them, as we use pointers and setters; such as the little Pilot-fish, which leads the huge shark to his prey; though this has been disputed, because the pilot-fish has been known to follow and play about a vessel just as it does usually about the body of a shark. The probability is that the pilot-fish is a species of parasite or diner-out, who will make particular friends with any big person who will feed him, and no doubt would find food in the refuse cast from the vessel, even as he would from the fragments torn off by the shark when feeding on any large body. Doubtless, too, there is a certain amount of protection obtained from consorting with monsters against other predacious fish. The fact of the pilot-fish conducting the shark to his prey has been disputed, but veritable instances related by eye-witnesses leave no doubt that at times it does fulfil this office for the shark. Nor is there anything singular in the fact. The pilot-fish is on the look-out for his own dinner probably, but will not venture on it until his protector has helped himself. We have numerous instances of this both in human and beast-life.

In weapons of offence, besides the shooting apparatus already mentioned, fish have, first, the sword. This is represented by the blade of the Sword-fish (*Xiphias gladius*). This fish possesses a tremendously powerful weapon, backed as it is by the great weight and impetus which it can bring to bear upon its thrusts. Many instances have been known in which the bottoms of ships have been pierced through by the

sword of the Xiphias. Ships sailing quietly along have received a shock as if they had touched a rock, and when they have been examined after the voyage, the broken blade of the fish has been found sticking in the ship's side. In the United States Service Museum there is, or was formerly, a specimen of the sword-fish's handywork in this respect. A portion of the weapon is shown sticking into the timbers of a ship, having pierced the sheathing and planking and buried itself deeply in the stout oak knee-timber of the vessel. Xiphias would, however, be terribly bothered with the change in naval architecture; and we are inclined to wonder what he would make of an iron-clad. Perhaps a little rough experience in this direction may make him more chary of indulging naughty tempers, and he may be taught *quid* Doctor Watts that, like little children, he "should not let his angry passions rise." If so, the cause of humanity will be strongly pleaded by the iron-clads, and the poor, clumsy, harmless whale will be the gainer. The Xiphias frequently weighs five or six hundred pounds in weight. The rapidity with which it can cut through the water is very great. It is a great enemy to the whale, and it is generally surmised that it mistakes a ship sailing through the water for a whale, and dashes at it with indiscriminating rage, often breaking and losing its sword by its blind fury. Persons bathing have not always been entirely safe from this fish, but have been stabbed to death by the Xiphias. One instance of this occurred in the Bristol Channel, near the mouth of the Severn, in which a small fish of some seventy or eighty pounds weight was the malefactor. They abound in the Mediterranean, and a hunt after, with the harpooning and slaying of the Xiphias is usually a work of time and much excitement. Akin to the sword-fish in their offensive capabilities are the Saw-fishes, though their weapons resemble rather such as are used by certain savage tribes than civilized saws. Nor does the word "saw" correctly describe them. They are terrible weapons, however, and the Indians who edge their spears with shark's teeth almost reproduce artificially the weapon of the saw-fish. The largest of them, *Pristis antiquorum*, is commonly found to grow to the length of fifteen or sixteen feet. The elongated snout is set upon either side with sharp spikes, thickly dispersed, and somewhat resembling the teeth of the shark. It forms a most fearful weapon, as the poor whale has good reason to know, to whom it is also a deadly enemy. There

are several members of the saw-fish tribe; one of the most peculiar is the *Pristis cirratus*, or Cirrated Saw-fish, of New South Wales. In the saw of this fish the teeth are irregular, one long and three short ones being placed alternately.

The weapon of the Narwhal — which by the bye is not strictly a fish, but a member of the Cetacea found chiefly in the Arctic seas — is the most perfect specimen of a very complete and efficient spear, being composed of the hardest ivory and tapering gradually to a point. But what the special purpose of this spear is, is not known; whether it is used as a means of attack upon its enemies, or to secure its prey, or whether it is a mere implement for digging a passage through opposing ice-floes, as is often supposed, we can but conjecture. It is a very singular fact that the spear of the narwhal is always situated on one side of the nose, chiefly the left; it does not project from the middle of the head: it is no long snout or horn,* but an elongated tooth or tusk. The narwhal, when young, has the germs of but three teeth. Sometimes two of these become developed and grow out spiked tusks, pointing in divergent directions; oftener, however, but one is the mature result. Whatever the use of this formidable spear may be, we know that it is very excellent and valuable ivory; but for any minute information as to the natural history of the animal itself, we should have to rely chiefly upon the knowledge of the Kamschatkans, which amounts to little more than that it is good eating, produces much oil, and is possessed of a valuable tooth.

Of daggers various we have many specimens, more particularly amongst the family of the Raïidæ;† and fearful weapons they are, some of them being serrated or barbed, and capable of inflicting terrible lacerated wounds. In most of these fish the dagger, or spine, is situated on and some way down the elongated tail; and as the animal has great muscular power in the tail, and is able to whirl it about in any direction it may desire, it not unfrequently deals forth most savage retribution to its captors. It knows full well, too, how to direct its aim, and it is told of some of the members of this family that if a hand, or even a finger, be laid upon the fish, it can, by a single turn of the tail, transfix with

* These spears were brought home formerly and imposed upon the credulous as the horn of the unicorn.

† There are three species of rays in this country which have these weapons — the Sting Ray, the Eagle Ray, and the Horned Ray.

its spine the offending member. So dangerous are the consequences of these wounds, that it is customary (and in France and Italy it is made compulsory by law on the fishermen) to cut off the tails above the spines of the fish thus armed before they are brought to market; and in this way almost the only specimen of the Eagle Ray (*Myliobatis aquila*) ever captured alive in this country* was mutilated; so that the specimen was useless. The Picked Dog-fish is also provided with two short, sharp spines—one on each dorsal fin. Many other fish are furnished with spines, either upon the fins or as horns, or in sharp projections from the gill-covers. The spines of the Greater and Lesser Weaver inflict most painful wounds, and cause such agony that it is commonly reported they are in some way venomous. This has been denied, and demonstrated to be impossible; yet it seems difficult to account for the following facts upon any other hypothesis. Sir W. Jardine, in speaking of the greater weaver, says:

It is much dreaded by the fisherman on account of its sharp spines, which are usually considered as venomous, but without any sufficient reason, as they are quite devoid of all poisonous secretion. Mr. Couch states that he has known three men wounded successively in the hand by the same fish, and the consequences have in a few minutes been felt as high as the shoulder.

Again, in treating of the lesser weaver, "If trodden on by bathers, as frequently happens, it inflicts," says Dr. Parnell, "a severe and painful wound, causing the part to swell and almost immediately to assume a dark brown appearance, which remains for five or six hours."

In the teeth of the confident assertion of great authorities it would be rash to say that any poisonous secretion exists. But if the above facts be quoted as proofs or instances of the absence of venom, they would appear to be singularly infelicitous ones.

Perhaps one of the most formidable

* This fish was captured at Ramsgate some years ago and sent to me; it was 18 inches long, exclusive of the tail, which was missing, and about 2 1-2 feet broad. Previous to this the tail of one was examined by Pennant, and a small one was found dead off Berwick by Dr. Johnson, but no living specimen had been captured. Since this was penned, however, but a few months ago, another one was caught and attracted a good deal of notice. This fish was taken off the Devonshire coast, and was about the same size, or a trifle larger than mine. It was preserved in the Exeter Museum, where it now is. Mr. Buckland very kindly sent me an excellent photograph of the fish. The colours appear to have been most brilliant.

weapons possessed by any fish is the natural and terrible pair of shears formed by the jaws of the Shark. The only parallel weapon of offence that can be cited as used by man would, perhaps, be the spiked portcullis, but the future may present us with steam shears with blades ten feet long, and intended to receive cavalry—who knows? There is no telling where the ingenuity of modern inventors in the destructive line may lead us. But there are not many instruments so efficient for their purpose as the tooth of a shark. It is difficult to handle one freely without cutting one's fingers; and when we consider the tremendous leverage of a shark's jaws employed against each other like scissors, armed with rows of lancets, it is evident that nothing in the shape of flesh, gristle, or bone could withstand them. Their capacity, too, is equal to their powers, for a pair of jaws taken from a shark of not more than nine feet long has been known to be passed down over the shoulders and body of a man six feet high without inconvenience. It was thought to be an act of very unusual strength and dexterity on the part of the Emperor Commodus to cut a man in two at one blow, but the jaws of the white shark find no difficulty whatever in executing that feat. The vast number of teeth contained within the shark's jaw has been accounted for by some writers on the hypothesis that they are erected when the shark seizes its prey, at all other times lying flat on their sides. It is now, however, more generally admitted that the shark only employs the outer row of teeth, and that the inner ones are a provision of nature against an accident which is, and must be, a very common one when the implements are considered, and the force with which they are employed—viz. the breaking of a tooth. In this case the corresponding tooth on the inside becomes erect, and is by degrees pushed forward into the place of the broken one—a wondrous and very necessary provision to keep so delicate and powerful an apparatus as the shark's jaw always in order. The voracity of the shark forms an endless resource for the writers on the marvellous whose bent lies towards natural history. Whole ships' crews have been devoured by sharks ere now, while their omnivorousness is extraordinary. This is well exemplified by the observation once made to me by an old tar, who was dilating on the variety of objects he had found at one time or another inside the bellies of sundry sharks. "Lord love ye, sir," quo' Ben, "there bain't nothin' as you

mightn't expect' to find in the insides o' a shirk, from a street pianny to a mile-stone." *

Continuing the description of the variety of weapons exemplified in fishes, we have a rival of that terrible scourge the knout in the tail of the Thresher, or Fox-shark (*Alopias vulpes*). The upper lobe is tremendously elongated, being nearly as long as the body of the fish, and amazingly muscular. It is curved like the blade of a scythe in shape, and the blows which it can and does inflict with this living flail can be heard at a great distance; a herd of dolphins are scattered as though they were mere sprats by one stroke of the thresher's tail, and stories of the combats between the whale on the one side and a combination of threshers and sword-fish on the other are too common to need more than a reference here. The form of battle usually consists in the sword-fish stabbing the whale from beneath, and so driving him up to the surface, when the fox-sharks spring upon him, and with resonant blows from their fearful knouts drive him below again upon the weapons of their allies.

The lasso is a weapon of some efficacy amongst various people; a form of lasso was even used by the Hungarians, and with great effect in the War of Independence. It consisted of a kind of long-lashed whip, with a bullet slung at the end of the lash. And we have a sort of living lasso in the foot of the Cephalopod. The cephalopods are the polypes of Aristotle, and belong to the molluscs. They are of the first order of invertebrate, or spineless animals. *Mollusca cephalopoda* is the style and titles of the family Cephalopoda, in English meaning "foot-headed"—that is, its organs of locomotion, or the greater part of them, are attached to its head, whence they radiate for the most part in long, tough, and pliant tentacles or arms, of great muscular powers. On these tentacles are placed rows of suckers of very singular construction, which singly or simultaneously adhere with great tenacity to any object they come in contact with. The arms are extended in all directions, when seeking prey. In the centre of them, in the middle of the stomach as it were, is the mouth of the creature, which is fully as curious as the rest of its anatomy, and

consists of a large and strong hooked beak, similar to a hawk's or parrot's. A fish or other creature comes within reach, and it is instantly lassoed by one of the tentacles, the others winding around it also to secure it in their folds. It is compressed tightly and drawn down to the beak, which rends and devours it at leisure, escape from these terrible folds being almost impossible.

The arms are also the means of propulsion, and are used as oars, by the aid of which the octopus manages to progress through the water with considerable rapidity. Mr. Wood, in his popular natural history, treats on this point as follows: "All the squids are very active, and some species, called 'flying squids' by sailors, and *ommatrepes* by naturalists, are able to dash out of the sea and to dart to considerable distances;" and he quotes Mr. Beale to show that they sometimes manage to propel themselves through the air for a distance of 80 or 100 yards, the action being likened to a something which might be achieved by a live corkscrew with eight prongs. In the account given in Bennett's *Whaling Voyage* they are often spoken of as leaping on board the ship, and even clear over it into the water on the other side. Nature has also furnished the cephalopod with another curious weapon of offence, or defence rather, in the shape of a bag of black fluid, or sepia, commonly termed by fishermen the ink-bag; and what a dreadful weapon of offence or defence ink may be, in many cases, there are few of us unaware. The cuttle when closely pursued sends out a cloud of it to hide him from view, and escapes under cover of it.

Some of the cephalopods possess extraordinary powers of muscular contraction, as the common squid, for example, which is spread out at one moment in a body and volume larger round than a large man's fist, and the next moment will contract itself so that it can easily pass through the cork-hole in a boat or the neck of a wine-bottle. Great sensational attraction has been directed to the octopus by the tremendous description of the combat in Victor Hugo's *Toilers of the Sea*. No doubt a large octopus, such as are found in the Pacific and elsewhere, and which sometimes have arms of eight or nine feet in length, could drown a man with the greatest ease, if he had no weapon and was caught by one under water. From remote ages the deeds of the polypus have been chronicled by poets and writers of strong imaginative powers; and thus we

* Witness the story of the *Maggie* schooner, very well told in the "Shipwreck Series" of the *Percy Anecdotes*. This vessel was capsized in a squall, and most of the crew took refuge in a boat, which was upset by overcrowding. They were surrounded by sharks at the time, and every man, save two, who managed to right the boat and escape, was devoured by the sharks.

have, probably, the partially fabulous story of the Lernean hydra, which, if it ever existed at all, had its origin no doubt in the impossible deeds of some improbable octopus. Then there is the story of the king's daughter and the noble diver, who dived for a gold cup and the love of his princess, but profited by neither, since he never came up again, being supposed to have been lassoed by some monster octopus at the bottom of the whirlpool, and many other well-known stories. The beast forms a very great attraction at the Crystal Palace aquarium where the ladies, of course, insist on calling him "the Devil Fish" (but that distinguished title belongs to another fish); and where he is poked up daily for their inspection, it being one of his diabolical tendencies to dwell "under ebon shades and low-browed rocks." What a life for a poor devil who wants nothing but solitude and retirement, to be a show-devil and at the beck and call of the ladies!

Amongst other offensive powers commanded by fish and men alike is the very remarkable one of electricity; it is slightly used in warlike as well as useful purposes. But the possible uses to which we may put electricity ourselves hereafter as an offensive weapon we cannot at present even guess at. It is a powerful agent to several kinds of fish, and yet ichthyologists are greatly at fault to settle the exact purpose for which it is given to them—whether it be for the purpose of killing the animals they prey on, or of facilitating their capture, or whether it be intended to render them more easy of digestion.

Mr. Couch, in speaking of the properties of electricity and the digestive capability of the Torpedo, has the following: "One well-known effect of the electric shock is to deprive animals killed by it of their organic irritability, and consequently to render them more easily disposed to pass into a state of decomposition, in which condition the digestive powers more speedily and effectively act upon them. If any creature more than others might seem to require such preparation of its food, it is the cramp ray, the whole canal of whose intestine is not more than half as long as the stomach." This is certainly very curious, and if it should be found that the same deficiency in point of digestive accommodation exists in the gymnotus and the other fishes of electric powers, the hypothesis would be converted almost into a certainty. In hunting up authorities to verify this curious fact, we find in the article on the gymnotus in *Chambers's Encyclo-*

pædia, that "all the gymnotids are remarkable for the position of the anus, which is so very far forward as in the electrical eel to be before the gill openings," which would certainly seem to confirm Mr. Couch's supposition.

Of the tremendous powers which can be given off in one shock it may be stated that Faraday having made experiments with the specimen which was shown several years ago at the Adelaide Gallery, estimated that an average shock emitted as great a force as the highest force of a Leyden battery of fifteen jars, exposing 3,500 inches of coated surface.

There are five different fish endowed with electrical powers. Of the torpedo there are two species—the old and new British torpedo; one of the *Gymnotus electricus*, or electric eel, as it is called; and two of the *Malapterurus*—viz. *M. electricus* of the Nile, called Raash or thunder fish, by the Arabs, and the *Malapterurus Beninensis*—the smallest of the electrical fishes, found in the Old Calabar River, which falls into the Bight of Bénin on the coast of Africa. The latter fish is a comparatively recent discovery, having been known to us only some fifteen or sixteen years. We have no very good account of either of these latter fish. A specimen of the last was sent to me three or four years ago. It is a curious little fish about five or six inches in length, and very much resembles the *Siluride* in general appearance, about the head especially. It has long barbules, three on each side of the mouth, and has a very bloated, puffy appearance, caused, it is to be presumed, by the electric apparatus, which is deposited between the skin and the frame of the fish. In the torpedo the electric battery is placed in two holes, one on either side of the eyes. Here a number of prismatic cells are arranged in the fashion of a honeycomb, the number being regulated by the age of the fish. These represent the jars in the battery, and they are capable of giving out a terrible shock, as many an incautious fisherman has experienced to his cost. We may trust also that the torpedos with which our coasts and harbours are likely to be thronged, will be capable of giving off even a severer shock; and though gunpowder and gun-cotton will be the shocking agents in these cases, yet electricity will play no unimportant part in their process. Formerly quacks galvanized their patients by the application of the natural torpedo, applying it to the joints and limbs for gout, rheumatism &c. That the electricity is true electricity has

been proved by a host of experiments. The electrometer has shown it, and needles have been magnetized just as if a battery had been employed.

There are many other points of similarity which might be enlarged upon; but if one were to attempt to set down all the strange and various considerations which come under cognisance in this subject, they would soon swell the matter much beyond the limits of a magazine article.

From The Spectator.

THE INTELLECT OF OLD AGE.

We do not know a more curious subject of study for a man interested in intellectual problems than that presented by M. Thiers' intellect, and the way in which it suffers, yet does not suffer, from the effect of age. Here is a mind which at seventy-five appears to be as vigorous as ever, which receives, studies, and assimilates every day new masses of facts, yet which seems to be inaccessible to new ideas. The quantities of new information, statistics, reports, motions, speeches, despatches, requests, threats, which M. Thiers must every day receive into his mind, and receive easily and intelligently, merely to get through his daily work, must be prodigious. Yet we know that the facts are received, for the President issues orders based upon them, which are always efficacious, and sometimes admirable. He can quote these new facts in his speeches, he can analyze them, he can very often use them with the most persuasive felicity, making them bend this way and that more easily than the youngest orator in the Chamber. In finance, for example, the facts are all new, the figures are new, the taxes are new, the objects of expenditure are new; but M. Thiers takes them all in, is no more capable of quoting the figures of 1842 as the figures of 1872 than of confusing Napoleon with Louis Philippe, or M. Rouher with the elder Casimir Perier. Yet if human eyes may judge on such a point, this same mind, so open to new information, is totally closed to new ideas, is literally incapable of comprehending, we do not merely mean of accepting, the financial principles proved by experience to be essential to the welfare of great States. His mind, so receptive of the facts, is non-receptive of the ideas which should correlate the facts, and he is no more capable of understanding that imports and exports must be equal, whatever the surface appearance of the figures, than

he is of forgetting the amount of last year's movement of trade. The same phenomenon is constantly observable in the case of old men who, like M. Thiers, have retained the memory, which is, we believe, almost a physical quality and independent of the true mind, unimpaired, — in old barristers, for instance, who will suck up the facts of a complicated brief almost without an effort, yet are incapable even of following the argument for a great change in any institution or system to which they have become accustomed. Try any old, very old, gardener of your acquaintance with a new plant, and a new method of bedding out old plants, and see the way his mind opens in the one case and shuts in the other; how easily the mass of new facts involved in a new plant, facts of colour, and shape, and cultivation, and pedigree are absorbed, while the new ideas fall back like flies from a painted peach. What is the cause of the difference? There is not the faintest reason for supposing that the mind is compartmented as to the things it can receive, and that the compartment for facts, the mental bin No. 1, is open longer than the compartment for abstract ideas. That is almost impossible, from the close relation between abstract and concrete ideas, and is disproved by a quantity of evidence, such as the readiness with which old men receive those ideas which are to them facts, with which old barristers swallow new laws, or old mathematicians new problems, or old astronomers new discoveries, like the spectrum. It is scarcely conceivable, again, that the whole mind should grow old, the mind being immaterial, though the mediums by which it works may age, and, it is conceivable, may in aging retain receptivity for one kind of food rather than another. The most probable theory is that it is not the mind, properly so called, which alters in age, but the will, which becomes weaker, and allows the mind to remain closed to all it has not become habituated to receive. That habit as regards facts is of course never out of use while we live, new facts pressing on us with every turn of our heads; but the mind may, as regards ideas, get rusty and stiff, till the exertion required of the will to move it becomes a pain from which we instinctively shrink. Many old men are conscious that this is the case, and shrink from the labour and pain of receiving new vivifying thoughts just as wilfully or consciously as they shrink from the labour and pain of a new undertaking, or a new journey, or in extreme cases, of a new doing of any sort. M. Thiers avows, it is said, that this

is his mental position towards the great group of ideas described on the Continent as "the Church"; Lord Palmerston allowed that it was his in relation to scientific truth, and it is constantly admitted by old men when speaking of theological speculations. They know that their minds could act, but draw back from the unaccustomed toil. It is evidence for this view that under unusual excitement, or necessity, or pressure of any sort, the old frequently develop a momentary receptivity, or become as receptive of new ideas of some one kind as if they were still young, a process often observed in very old statesmen, and kings, and other persons under intense responsibility. The will in such cases is reinvigorated, and compels the mind to act, as from disuse or old habit it is disinclined to do, but as it always, but for unwillingness, retained the power of doing. If, for example, circumstances of any sort convinced M. Thiers that he *must* comprehend and, so to speak, receive Babinet's writings, he could do it, though when the necessity is not upon him that feat seems so completely beyond his mental power. The irritability which sometimes marks old age proceeds, we take it, from just the same cause, — a failure in the will, which in its strength restrains the impulse towards querulousness which in its weakness becomes so manifest to the observer.

It would follow from what we have said, that if the memory keeps perfect, a point which appears to depend entirely upon physical conditions, — the memory, for instance, growing bright as to the incidents of childhood when it grows dull as to what happened yesterday, — there is no reason why, as regards anything but new abstract ideas, the mind in old age should be less strong than the mind in maturity, though it may have more difficulty in using the media through which it works, and we find this constantly to be the case. Very old Generals, like Radetzky, have commanded victorious armies; very old statesmen, like Palmerston, have guided parties successfully; and very old orators, like M. Thiers, are often strangely eloquent. It would be almost impossible to show that for oratorical purposes his mind has aged at all, that he has lost any one of those powers which go to create oratorical success unless it be, and we should doubt that, the acuteness of his sensibility to the mental atmosphere around him. We are accustomed to speak of Lyndhurst's later efforts as wonders, and so they were as physical efforts; but there is nothing in old age to make a man

less capable of reviewing the facts of the year by his old lights with all the eloquence, and bitterness, and epigrammatic terseness that he ever possessed. The Duke of Wellington in extreme old age became impervious to the ideas of his day, and showed a strong indisposition towards new men even in the Army; but there is no proof whatever that if England had been invaded by the kind of army he was accustomed to defeat, he would not have displayed all his ancient generalship. He would have received all the new facts about numbers, equipment, and the like, as M. Thiers receives the new facts about revenue and expenditure, and would have applied the old principles as successfully as ever. Nothing would have gone from him except strength of will to compel the mind to perform an unusual and therefore disagreeable task. Von Moltke is as great a general as ever he was, is able even to develop his old knowledge by the addition of a system of railway strategy; it is only when asked to consider a new scheme of discipline that his mind closes, and he shows himself unable to believe or even to follow any idea except that of severe punishment.

We say "nothing" had gone, because we wish to put our argument strongly; but we say it with a reserve as to the possibilities connected with that faculty of which we spoke a fortnight ago, the little-understood faculty of mental accumulation. There may be something material about that, as about memory, for we know very little of the circumstances which affect it — which suspend its action, for example, in the Greek, while the Jew, who is "older" than he, seems to possess an increasing quantity — and one of these circumstances may as regards the individual, be old age. That the faculty is separate from memory is clear from its non-existence in animals, which have very keen memories; but it may have a very intimate relation to it, and may be subject, like the memory, to conditions almost entirely physical. That, however, is a mere suggestion *en passant*. The relation of matter to mind has been investigated for ages, but the relation of matter not to mind, but to the powers which the immaterial mind utilizes for its own benefit, has not been sufficiently studied for any one to dogmatize about the subject, and our point to-day is independent of it. It is that the impenetrability displayed by old age to new ideas is not the result of a failure of mental power, for that, as we

see in M. Thiers very often does not fail, but of a decay in the will which compels the mind to exert itself in that direction.

From The Spectator.

M. THIERS AND THE GERMAN TREATY.

Nobody loves his dentist, and M. Thiers will not increase his popularity in France by his new Treaty with Germany. The arrangement was necessary, and its terms are in the main beneficial to France, but they bring home to the French the fact of their defeat with a heart-breaking cogency. The German Chancellor has allowed no impulse of pity, or generosity, or apprehensiveness of the future to turn him from his stern resolve that France shall be disabled for war, shall be weighted until a spring has become, even in her own eyes, impossible. Champagne is to be evacuated as soon as twenty millions more of the tribute has been paid, but even then Germany has yet a hundred millions to receive, and until it is all paid off she keeps 50,000 men at French expense upon French soil, holds Belfort, the gate of the South, and is authorized to reoccupy Champagne at her own discretion. As we read the Treaty, France, even if she could raise the entire indemnity by one convulsive effort, could not till March, 1874, demand the departure of the Germans, who desire to hold their points of vantage until Metz has been fully repaired, and Strasburg rendered impregnable from the West by the mighty circle of forts which the engineers are now pressing on so fast. They may, of course, retire sooner, for much in Germany depends on a few waning lives; but they are not bound by the Treaty to retire, and will regulate their acts in obedience to the counsel of men who doubt whether France, after all, has been sufficiently reduced, and look askance at the Belgian frontier which is not in their hands. No offering has been made to France, to opinion, or to the Fates who punish the too fortunate. The indemnity is not reduced, the time for paying it is not in reality extended; the weight of the invading army is not lightened; nothing, in fact, has been granted except the privilege of shifting a burden from one shoulder to another, from Champagne to the departments nearer the Eastern frontier. All that Germany has a right to ask she takes, and if she surrenders anything, it is on terms which in their hard rigidity, their air of keen distrust, take all of grace away from the apparent concession.

Nevertheless, although M. Thiers cannot obtain from this Treaty any increase to his power, we question if it will in any degree diminish it. It is all very well to say, as the Monarchists are saying, that a monarchy would have obtained better terms than a republic, but there is not a tittle of evidence to justify the assertion. The House of Hohenzollern has risen to its lonely height of grandeur by destroying thrones. Denmark has not been favoured because she has a king, or Austria because she is monarchical, nor has all the antiquity of the Guelphs availed to preserve Hanover from absorption. If Germany treats any power with exceptional respect, it is the American Republic, for whose sake she recently modified her military law, reducing its pressure upon returned emigrants, and she has no more historic reason to favour either branch of the Bourbons than to welcome the family of Bonaparte. The Chancellor himself, who guides her policy, is probably friendly to a Republic, on the cynical ground that a Republic is the nearest approach to anarchy, and anarchy disqualifies States from fighting; and he has always displayed a disposition to support M. Thiers as a man of the old diplomacy, whose ideas he understands, against any probable rival. The French people are not likely in their present temper to understate his hardness, to credit him with any weakness towards the Bourbons, or to believe that he would see with pleasure the revival of a military monarchy in France, while they are likely, as we read the Treaty, to be freshly impressed with the magnitude of the dangers from which M. Thiers is trying to deliver his country. Even now the work to be done before the Germans leave, the sums to be raised, the arrangements to be made, the obstacles to be overcome, fatigue the imagination, and render the coolest observers willing to pardon anything to the man who, at seventy-five years of age, displays the courage to attempt such tasks. The parties might risk civil war, but not civil war and its consequence, foreign occupation. If they depose M. Thiers, it must be to appoint either a Prince, like the Duc d'Aumale, or a friend of monarchy, like Marshal Macmahon, and either selection would be the signal for an explosion in the cities, the South, and possibly in the Army itself, which would render the observance of this Treaty financially impossible, that is, would compel Germany to extend her occupation. We question whether, in view of such a contingency, the majority would have the nerve to accept the resignation of M.

Thiers, much less to take any step intended to force him to resign. It is easy to say, of course, that M. Thiers is acting imprudently in forcing his Protectionist views upon the Chamber, that he talks nonsense about Treaties of Commerce which "restrict the liberty of France" — as if every contract did not restrict a liberty — and that his navigation tax has already injured the prosperity of the seaport towns, and it may all be quite true besides, but all will not justify the majority in risking civil war. Nor do we believe it will persuade them to risk it, or him to give them the opportunity. The immediate gain M. Thiers expects from his tax is only about two millions, and he and his opponents had much better put up with a deficit of that amount for another year or two than by an open quarrel damage the credit which it is the object of the "equilibrium" to secure. We believe the majority will see this, more especially as the substitutes they suggest for M. Thiers' taxes, though very much less injurious, are not one wit more popular than those taxes themselves. A nation of thrifty peasants and shopkeepers always striving to avoid cash out-lays dreads and detests direct taxes to a degree the wasteful English can scarcely conceive, to a degree which renders every new tax of the kind dangerous to order, and which has already alarmed M. Gambetta and the Left into promising that they will, while reserving their own convictions, support M. Thiers' proposals in the interest of the Republic, which would be discredited in the eyes of the people by further direct demands.

Besides, and this after all is the grand point of the situation, the new Treaty renders a general election more instead of less feasible than before, and a general election it is well understood, would result in the establishment of the definitive Republic so dreaded by the majority. M. Thiers may shrink from dismissing the Assembly, calling a new one, and asking from it a bill of indemnity legalizing his extra-constitutional act, because that proceeding might approach too closely to a *coup d'état*, and would render it necessary for him first of all to secure the Army; but he would not shrink from calling upon the Members to dissolve themselves, and in so calling would occupy an almost unassailable position. The request would be strictly within the law, for the Chamber has the right to dissolve itself, and the President has the right to make propositions to the Chamber. The Left and the Left Centre would support him, and it

would take some courage for the Right and the Right Centre openly to resist. They may have a majority, but they would have against them the entire Executive Government — for they have, under the proposition Rivet, no power to dismiss M. Thiers — all the cities, and an immense majority of their constituents, sure to side with the authority which calls on them to re-accept or reject the candidates returned upon their hands. The moral pressure from constituents aware that they have changed more than their representatives, and anxious to embody their new opinion in act, would be almost irresistible, more especially by men who are aware that that they were elected to perform a function — to make a peace — which has already been performed by M. Thiers rather than by themselves. If they deny this, if they affirm that they still represent the country, they have no reason to dread a verdict which, if they are right, will send them back masters of the situation, while if they acknowledge the truth, and resist dissolution because they will not be returned again, they confess by remaining that they have ceased to represent the people, that is, they have no moral right at all. They will stand alone in their own right, denounced by the Executive, opposed by a minority of their own colleagues, and unsupported by the constituencies whose will they profess to speak. No such position as that is possible in France, where men are logical, or in any country where respect for legality has not entered into the very blood of the people, and the Assembly, after some furious speeches, and possibly some furious efforts to resume its delegated powers, would be driven to choose between obedience to a perfectly legal request or a *coup d'état* directed against the Executive, which if unsuccessful would cover them with ridicule, and if successful, give the signal for civil war. A single man might encounter such a risk, but that three hundred gentlemen, most of them wealthy and worn out, with no confidence in the people, in their leaders, or in themselves, will arrive at such a resolution, will strike a *coup d'état* to avoid their own re-election, is as incredible as absurd. We do not believe that the Assembly could survive a week after M. Thiers had told the country that it ought to be renewed, even if he applied no pressure except that public opinion to which representatives, of all men, are naturally most sensitive, and which is quite as strongly felt in France as on this side the Channel, the

public voting in the Chamber constantly reversing the vote by ballot. The Assembly, as it exists, lies in the last resort at the mercy of M. Thiers, and will either be dissolved, or in fear of a dissolution will accede to his demands.

From The Pall Mall Gazette.
THE SUCCESSION TO THE TURKISH THRONE.

A CORRESPONDENT at Constantinople says, writing on the 20th of June:—"The question of the succession to the throne still creates much excitement here. Mourad Effendi (son of Abdul Medjid), who, according to the principle hitherto adopted, would be the rightful heir, is thirty-two years old, and is a prince of considerable ability and learning; he is very popular in the country, and the belief is very general that if he were supplanted by the eldest son of the present Sultan this would be nothing less than a violation of the Koran. It is said that the present Grand Vizier, before obtaining his appointment, promised the Sultana Valide that her grandson, the young prince Youssuf Izeddin, would be nominated heir to the throne provided he (the Grand Vizier) should remain in office for a period of two years; and this is supposed to be the true explanation of the warmth with which he advocates a change in the succession. His plans, however, meet with so much opposition that there is but little chance of their being realized except by a *coup d'état*; and, indeed, some such consummation seems to be preparing, if one may judge from the incessant removal of high public functionaries from their posts and the appointment of men entirely devoted to the Grand Vizier as their successors, and especially from the new policy he has inaugurated towards Russia, with whom he is daily becoming more intimate. The part played by the Cabinet of St. Petersburg in this intrigue is only too evident,

being simply a repetition of the policy of the Empress Catherine towards Poland before the partition of that unfortunate country. So revolutionary a measure as a change in the succession of Turkey was as sure of Russian support as the separatist movement among the Slavonic subjects of the Sultan, or any other means of precipitating the disruption of his empire. Notwithstanding this, the semi-official papers continue to advocate an alliance with Russia, and the influence of the Grand Vizier is undoubtedly increasing. It was hoped a few days ago that Midhat Pasha, the late Governor of Bagdad, who was coming to Constantinople after a long absence, would counteract the policy of the Grand Vizier, and perhaps eventually succeed him. He is a man of great statesmanlike ability, much esteemed at Court, and known for his liberal opinions and his hostility to Russia, who has done her utmost to neutralize his influence by inducing the Sultan to keep him in a sort of magnificent exile at Bagdad. He was so dissatisfied, however, with the new policy which had been inaugurated at Constantinople that he threw up his governorship, notwithstanding the great revenues and almost absolute power it gave him, and hastened to the capital: but yesterday the news arrived that he had been stopped on the way, and was to be 'interned' for six years at Kutaya, thus leaving Russia and the Grand Vizier masters of the situation. Some of the ambassadors, on learning the news, went to the Grand Vizier to ask whether the pasha's 'internment' had been carried out in consequence of an 'irad' (written order) of the Sultan; to which the Vizier coldly replied that he could not admit the right of foreign representatives to interfere in the internal affairs of the empire. The news was, however, contradicted on the following day; but it has not yet transpired whether this contradiction emanated from an official source, and, at any rate, Midhat Pasha has not yet arrived in the capital."

A CORRESPONDENT writes:—"Prof. Lechler, of Leipzig, is about to publish a life of our great reformer, Wioliff. He has been engaged in this work for several years, and has discovered in the library of Vienna several manuscripts of Wioliff which have never been published; he has also made a careful examination of the Hussite

manuscripts. His work will throw considerable additional light on Wioliff's intimate connexion with Huss and the Bohemian reformers. The work is in such a state of advancement that it will probably be published in the course of the autumn."

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